

ARE YOU A GOOD PARTNER? USING THE SITUATION JUDGMENT TEST METHOD
TO IDENTIFY AND MEASURE ROMANTIC COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

We devised a measure seeking to assess competency within romantic relationships using a scenario-based paradigm that was informed by the situation judgment test (SJT) and emotional intelligence literatures. Pilot data revealed positive correlations between romantic competence (RC) and romantic relationship outcomes such as satisfaction and self-efficacy within romantic relationships. To further research of this type, we conducted a study examining daily romantic behaviors, feelings, and motivations, while also collecting partner and peer reports. Results revealed that RC was a significant predictor of romantic success as quantified by self-perceptions and peer reports, and some of these relationships remain significant when controlling for personality and attachment style. Somewhat surprisingly, RC did not predict partner perceptions. Regardless, RC was a robust predictor of the daily outcomes, suggesting that RC has daily manifestations. The bulk of the evidence supports the idea that RC is an important individual difference within romantic relationships.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2014, a United States national census revealed a marriage rate of 6.9 per 1000 people, which is a sharp decline from 8.2 in the year 2000 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). These data and other sociological indices indicate that many relationships encounter serious problems prior to marriage and not every relationship is successful. Theorists (e.g., Burleson, 1995) have long proposed that differences in relationship success could be due to something like romantic competence (RC), or the ability to initiate and maintain romantic relationships. According to this literature, romantic relationships that succeed are characterized by qualities such as satisfaction (Epstein, Warfel, Johnson, Smith, & McKinney, 2013) and longevity (Fletcher, Simpson, & Thomas, 2000; Zimmer-Gemback & Ducat, 2010). We believed that RC could serve as a mechanism that can account for variability in some of these relationship qualities, allowing us to predict on an a priori basis which relationships will be successful. For purposes of this investigation, we intend to integrate some of the elements of the situational judgment test (SJT) method with scoring metrics based on the emotional intelligence literature (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003) as a way to study the role of competence factors in romantic relationships. Doing so will offer an objective and accurate means to determine what sorts of knowledge people have about romantic relationships and whether that knowledge systematically varies across people. These ideas will be developed below.

Romantic Competence (RC)

I define RC as tacit or implicit knowledge about romantic relationships and how they function. This construct is probably related to, but also distinct from, relationship predictors like interpersonal problem-solving, attachment style, and emotion regulation abilities, which have also been implicated in relationship behaviors (Shulman, Davila, & Shachar-Shapira, 2011).

Theoretically, RC should facilitate the acquisition, development, and maintenance of mutually satisfying relationships, similar to other forms of competence that have been implicated in most dyadic relationships (Hansson, Jones, & Carpenter, 1984). Relational competence, in general, encompasses things like being able to recognize problematic occurrences, the likely motivations of the other party, and knowledge concerning effective methods of communication and response (Spitzberg & Hecht, 1984). Previous research on RC would imply that certain skills are necessary for successfully maintaining relationships, and identifying such skills is crucial for understanding the construct (Burlison, 1995). RC skills should thus correlate with factors that promote successful romantic relationship outcomes in multiple areas, such as ones described by the Epstein Love Competencies Inventory (ELCI).

The ELCI depicts seven relationship competencies pertinent to overall well-being within romantic relationships, which include: communication, conflict resolution, knowledge of partner, life skills, self-management, sex and romance, and stress management (Epstein et al., 2013). Other studies have produced a similar set of factors, but the ones where there seems to be the most agreement are communication, life skills, and knowledge of the partner (Le, Dove, Agnew, Korn, & Mutso, 2010; Simpson, 1987). One relevant set of predictors along these lines is empathetic accuracy, which consists of the ability to accurately read the thoughts and feelings of romantic partners. Skills of this type have been shown to predict romantic relationship quality (Simpson, Ickes, & Blackstone, 1995). In addition, both emotion regulation (Bellavia, & Murray, 2003; Donnellan, Larsen-Rife, & Conger, 2005) and conflict resolution (Riggio et al., 2013; Simpson, Rholes, & Phillips, 1996) have been supported as significant predictors of relationship satisfaction and longevity. Potentially, one would be able to assess these forms of knowledge in a

way akin to a multiple-choice test or some other form of social knowledge test (Sternberg, Wagner, Williams, & Horvath, 1995).

In addition to knowledge, personality traits are also useful to consider in the domain of RC. Along these lines, we know that traits like positive emotionality can influence the longevity of a relationship (Donnellan et al., 2005). In fact, marital satisfaction can be predicted by relationship motives, satisfaction with social support, and psychological distress (Rosen-Grandon, Myers, Hattie, 2004). There are also traits that overlap with an RC perspective. For example, research has shown that abilities that implicate perspective taking are probably involved in successful long-term relationships (Davis & Oathout, 1987). By contrast, personality traits that appear obtusely self-centered in nature, such as narcissism or aggression, are inversely related to relationship success, and possibly RC (Koladich & Atkinson, 2016).

Moreover, romantic competence should also vary with relationship experiences. Adolescents who are able to maintain longer-termed romantic relationships in later childhood have been shown to successfully exhibit smoother romantic processes in adulthood (Madsen & Collins, 2011). Conversely, adolescents with a higher quantity of romantic partners ultimately fail to move towards more mature phases of the relationship. Data of this type speak to the possibility of individual differences in RC that portend relationship success across multiple developmental periods. An important distinction here is between *dating experiences* and *romantic relationship experiences* of a more committed type. The term dating refers to an individual's experiences of meeting with others for joint activities within a romantic context, but with no long-term expectations of commitment (Shulman, Collins, & Knafo, 1997). By contrast, romantic relationship experiences imply greater mutuality in relationship cognitions and motivations (Brown, Feiring, & Furman, 1999). It is reasonable to think that the latter sources of

experience are particularly relevant for RC, especially to the extent that RC is defined as functioning within one's current romantic relationship.

Another set of processes relevant to RC concern the ability to identify the values of one's potential relationship partners. To the extent that a person has a good ability to size up their potential romantic partners, they should be able to choose partners who match them in terms of important qualities like trustworthiness, attractiveness, and resources (Fletcher, Simpson, Thomas, & Giles, 1999). On the other hand, people who are unskilled at reading others may pursue and end up with the "wrong" people, which should negatively impact the chances that their relationship will be successful while augmenting conflict in the interim (Campbell, Simpson, Kashy, & Fletcher, 2001). Thus, factors like RC could be implicated in dyadic, as well as intrapsychic, processes that benefit relationships.

The aforementioned research indicates that RC should be associated with the ability to make decisions and engage in behaviors designed to benefit one's partner as well as the self, and therefore one's relationship as a whole (Impett, Gable, & Peplau, 2005; Lemay & Spongberg, 2015). Through processes of this type, individuals should differ in whether they are capable of acting effectively within relationships, which will further support relationship satisfaction, longevity, and stability (Algoe, Gable, & Maisel, 2010; Sadikaj et al., 2015). There is a consensus that partners that regulate their emotions efficiently, practice effective problem solving strategies, and believe in their ability to do both have better romantic relationship outcomes (Shulman et al., 2011). My proposal intends to utilize knowledge and decision-making strategies to investigate RC as a way to determine why some romantic relationships succeed while others fail.

Measurement of RC

RC could be related to attachment styles, which are theoretically concerned with the processes by which people develop and maintain affectionate bonds with one another (Simpson, 1990). Pioneered in the work of Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980), people who display a secure attachment orientation view themselves as friendly and good-natured, and thus view their partner as trustworthy and reliable. People who exhibit an avoidant attachment style view themselves as suspicious and distant, viewing their partner as unreliable or clingy. Lastly, people with an anxious attachment style view themselves as unconfident and misjudged, viewing their partner as unreliable and unwilling or unable to commit to the relationship. The secure attachment style best promotes optimal romantic relationship outcomes, whereas people who have anxious or avoidant attachment orientations tend to engage in behaviors that cause problems for their relationships (Fagundes & Schlinder, 2012; Overall & Simpson, 2015; Simpson, 1990; Simpson, Collins, Tran, & Haydon, 2007).

Equating RC with attachment style would have the effect of equating RC with what can be measured through self-report. Indeed, RC has typically been measured using self-report questionnaires, which are designed to directly ask people about their abilities to manage relationships (Graham, 2011). However, this method has been shown to be fallible in obtaining valid information concerning romantic abilities. Individuals in relationships are biased in certain systematic ways. For example, they tend to report that their relationships are functioning better than they actually are (Scinta & Gable, 2007). Although such unrealistic views can benefit relationships (Murray, Holmes, Dolderman, & Griffin, 2000; Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1999a; 1999b), data of this type suggest that there are motivational factors that can pose problems for veridical assessments of romantic relationship functioning. It is also true that people

overestimate their competency as romantic partners (Davila et al., 2009). Ideally, we could develop tests for RC that do not depend on self-report, or at least do not rely on self-ascribed romantic abilities (McClelland, 1987).

The approach we take considers the different ways that people respond to life situations, as well as the knowledge they possess (Cervone, 2004; Shoda & Mischel, 2000). Many of these differences will follow from sources of competence and knowledge that are difficult to verbalize (Davila et al., 2009). To measure these sources of what we generally refer to as *social competence*, we have developed performance-based scenario tests. The angle we take here is inspired by the situational judgment test (SJT) literature (McDaniel, Hartman, Whetzel, & Grubb, 2007), which presents prospective or actual employees with vignettes that model features of the job (Motowidlo, Dunnette, & Carter, 1990). Each scenario is paired with different possible ways of responding and potential employees are typically asked to choose the way of responding that will be the most effective. People receive high scores to the extent that they choose the right answers, as identified by experts or group consensus. These tests have often been used in basic and applied organizational contexts and it is now clear that they predict job performance (McDaniel, Morgeson, Finnegan, Campion, & Braverman, 2001), even after controlling for personality and job tenure (Lievens, Peeters, & Schollaert, 2008). We can adapt ideas of this type using SJT measures in which the key vignette material concerns romantic dilemmas. Following earlier work (e.g., Robinson, Fetterman, Hopkins, & Krishnakumar, 2013), we have developed several tests that can assess the extent to which people respond to romantic dilemmas in competent ways.

RC MEASURE AND PILOT DATA

In devising a measure of RC, three psychologists (1 professor, 1 graduate student, and 1 advanced undergraduate student) collectively came up with 150 potential scenarios, with the intent to keep them realistic and diverse (e.g., “Jason does not like his partner’s best friend”). The 150 scenarios were then randomized and rated (1 = poor scenario, 5 = excellent scenario), and the top 50 scenarios were retained (M rating = 4.21; SD = 0.23). For the retained scenarios, six response options were created for each scenario (e.g., for Jason, “find his partner a new best friend”), and four of them were kept, based on ratings from the group. This process is generally compatible with procedures used in the SJT literature (Whetzel & McDaniel, 2009), except that all of our situations are romantic in nature. The scenarios were then randomized and presented to 57 undergraduate students who were currently in a relationship, and they were asked to rate the effectiveness of each way of responding to each romantic relationship scenario (1 = not at all effective, 5 = very effective). We use a consensus-scoring technique whereby people receive scores that reflect the percentage of the entire sample who gave the same rating (Mayer et al., 2003). We then chose the 10 scenarios that had the highest item-total correlations, resulting in a mean of .3747 (SD = .0816). In other words, the average rating was shared by 37.47% of one’s peers, which is considerably above chance. The standard deviation for total scores was .0816, meaning that there were appreciable individual differences in RC. Of further note, the RC measure was reliable across scenarios (α = .91).

The current version of the RC test requires people to make two ratings – how effective an action is and how likely the self would be to do that action if they were in the scenario. In the first section (RC-E), participants are asked to rate how effective they think each response is for a given scenario (1 = not effective at all, 5 = extremely effective). An example of a scenario is,

“Steven looks on his partner's phone and finds text messages and pictures from other men. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Steven could deal with the situation” accompanied by the following responses: “text them telling them to stop messaging”, “get advice from friends of what to do”, “confront his partner about the texts and pictures”, and “flirt with other women in return”. Each response is presented and rated individually, giving this section a total of 40-items. The RC-E section is predicted to measure a knowledge-based aspect of RC, which is equivalent to the question of whether people know which behaviors are effective in romantic relationships.

In the second section (RC-S), participants put themselves into each of the scenarios they had previously read, and rate how likely they would be to engage in the presented behavioral responses, irrespective of effectiveness considerations (1 = extremely unlikely, 5 = extremely likely). For example, the “Steven” scenario shown previously would be presented as, “You look on your partner’s phone and find text messages and pictures from other people. ***If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that you would do the following?” This scenario would be accompanied by those same four responses as shown in the RC-E section, only this time assessing the likelihood of engaging in that behavior. This section has 40-items as well, and thus the whole test consists of 80 ratings. The RC-S section is predicted to measure a behavioral component of RC, where people are asked how they would personally respond in a given scenario, regardless of how effective it is.

Both sections are individually scored using a system that favors answers given by a larger percentage of other people. This consensus-based scoring system was adapted from procedures established by Mayer et al. (2003). The rationale is that the average opinion of a large group of people is likely to be correct (Legree, Psotka, Tremble, & Bourne, 2005), even though individual

responses could be idiosyncratic or mistaken (Surowiecki, 2004). The RC norms that will be utilized for the purposes of this investigation were derived using this method in a pilot study. Participants receive a higher score to the extent that their thinking of what constitutes an effective response is parallel to that of the entire group. All participants in the norming sample were currently in romantic relationships and should therefore have some degree of “collective wisdom” concerning the romantic domain (Legree et al., 2005). Table 1 details an example of one of the scenarios along with the hypothetical responses of one participant, as a way of demonstrating the scoring procedures.

Table 1

Example Scenario, Effectiveness Norms, Hypothetical Responses, and Scoring

RC-E Scenario: Roger is suspicious that his partner has cheated, but has no proof. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Roger could deal with the situation.

1 = Not effective at all; 5 = Extremely effective

RC-S Scenario: You are suspicious that your partner has cheated, but have no proof. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

1 = Extremely unlikely; 5 = Extremely likely

Ways of Responding: *i.* Secretly follow her around; *ii.* Start snooping around for evidence; *iii.* Get his best friend to find out; *iv.* Confront the partner

Way	Effectiveness Norms (%)					E.Rat.	E.Sco.	S.Rat.	S.Sco.
	1	2	3	4	5				
<i>i.</i> Follow	51%	41%	07%	01%	00%	2	0.41	1	0.51
<i>ii.</i> Snoop	39%	43%	14%	04%	00%	3	0.14	3	0.14
<i>iii.</i> Friend	27%	46%	22%	04%	01%	3	0.22	4	0.04
<i>iv.</i> Confront	02%	03%	21%	32%	42%	4	0.32	3	0.21

Note: The hypothetical participant made ratings of 2, 3, 3, and 4 for effectiveness (E.Rat.) and would receive a scenario-specific romantic competence score of .2725 (the average of .41, .14, .22, and .32). The hypothetical participant gave self-likelihood ratings (S.Rat.) of 1, 3, 4, and 3, and their self-effectiveness score for this scenario is .2250 (the average of .51, .14, .04, and .21).

Women are often considered to be better partners in romantic relationships. Consistent with this line of thinking, pilot data ($N = 57$) revealed that women received higher RC-E scores than men ($r = .30, p = .023$). Through experience, we might expect people with higher levels of RC to feel more confident in their abilities in the relationship domain. Consistent with this

reasoning, we found a positive correlation between RC-E scores and romantic self-efficacy ($r = .36, p = .007$) (Lopez, Morúa, & Rice, 2007). In addition, as might be expected, people with higher RC-E scores reported that they both give ($r = .34, p = .009$) and receive ($r = .36, p = .006$) more social support to/from their partners (Shakespeare-Finch & Obst, 2011). Finally, there was an inverse relationship with reactive ($r = -.35, p = .008$) and pushy ($r = -.47, p < .001$) behaviors in the context of the relationship (Zacchilli, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 2009). These results provide some initial basis for thinking that the RC-E measure captures social reasoning skills and behavioral tendencies that matter for romantic relationships.

In a second pilot study ($N = 148$), additional support for the RC-E was found, along with preliminary support for the RC-S. Participants with higher RC-E ($M = .4189; SD = .0541$) scores were more likely to receive higher RC-S scores ($M = .3329; SD = .0635$) scores, $r = .43, p < .001$, indicating that greater knowledge about effective behaviors is likely to translate into behavioral tendencies that are also more effective. In parallel with the first pilot study, RC was associated with increased relationship self-efficacy (RC-E: $r = .27, p < .001$; RC-S: $r = .32, p < .001$), as well as decreased reactive (RC-E: $r = -.25, p = .002$; RC-S: $r = -.19, p = .018$) and pushy (RC-E: $r = -.19, p = .022$; RC-S: $r = -.38, p < .001$) behaviors. In addition, high RC people characterized their relationships as more satisfying (RC-E: $r = .22, p = .008$; RC-S: $r = .27, p < .007$), trusting (RC-E: $r = .21, p = .011$; RC-S: $r = .31, p < .001$), and loving (RC-E: $r = .24, p = .003$; RC-S: $r = .26, p = .001$) (Fletcher et al., 2000). Lastly, RC was inversely related to aggressive acts towards partners (RC-E: $r = -.31, p < .001$; RC-S: $r = -.21, p = .012$) (Cui, Lorenz, Conger, Melby, & Bryant, 2005). Given that this pilot sample was larger than the first one, and given that this was the first study to use a fully established set of scenarios, the norms will henceforth be based on this second pilot sample. The purpose of the research proposed

below is to build upon and significantly extend our knowledge of RC and what it predicts about romantic relationships.

STUDY OVERVIEW

The RC measures are not self-report measures in that scores are based on knowledge about how to respond to relationship scenarios rather than self-perceptions of one's personality qualities or romantic tendencies. Thus, correlations between the RC measures and self-reported outcomes like relationship satisfaction cannot be attributed to method factors or explicit beliefs about the self. Even so, the pilot tests focused exclusively on self-reported outcomes and we therefore needed to extend the research to other sorts of outcomes, like the relationship satisfaction of one's romantic partner or perceptions of romantic competence among one's peers.

In my thesis study, psychology undergraduates who have been in a romantic relationship for at least a month completed the RC measure prior to completing personality and relationship quality measures. Of more importance, the same participants provided us with the names and email addresses of their romantic partners as well as at least two peers who know the most about their relationship histories. Romantic partners reported on their relationship satisfaction (Fletcher et al., 2000), the extent to which they receive social support (Macdonald, 1998), and the extent to which their partner abuses them in non-extreme ways (Attala, Hudson, & McSweeney, 1994). Peers, instead, reported on the target's relationship history, where the measures are partly modeled from the Dating History Questionnaire (Furman, Low, & Ho, 2009). These informants were asked to estimate the number of romantic relationships that the target has had as well as how many of these have been successful and unsuccessful. Of paramount interest, we conducted a daily diary study (Robinson, Moeller, Buchholz, Boyd, & Troop-Gordon, 2012) with this sample so that we can assess day-to-day variations in romantic behaviors and feelings. Altogether, this rich data set allowed us to examine multiple hypotheses. For example, we predicted that people with higher levels of RC are likely to have romantic partners that are more

satisfied with their relationships, should have more positive romantic histories, and should engage in more prosocial, caring day-to-day romantic behaviors.

METHOD

Participants

In order to participate in the study, participants had to be in an exclusive, heterosexual romantic relationship for at least a month and their partner had to live in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Using the SONA system at North Dakota State University, 114 students (63.72% female; $M_{age} = 20.12$, $SD = 3.39$; 89.53% Caucasian) signed for a study titled “A Romantic Relationship and Daily Experiences Study”. One participant was dropped because they broke up with their partner during the study’s conduct. On average, participants reported being in their current relationship for 6 to 18 months (minimum = 1 month, maximum = 2 years or more), reported having 3 to 4 romantic partners in their lifetime, and participants also reported that their longest relationship to date had lasted 1 to 2 years.

Participants were asked to record the names of their partner and at least two friends that are familiar with their romantic relationship history. Partners and friends referred for the study were sent a short survey through Qualtrics, with questions relating to the participant’s relationship. In addition, participants were asked to participate in a 14-day daily diary study.

Participant-Based Procedures and Measures

Participants seeking extra credit for psychology classes were awarded up to 24 credits, based on how many parts of the study were completed. Participants either came into the lab ($n = 27$) or were granted access to the surveys online through Qualtrics ($n = 60$). Participants not seeking extra credit were compensated up to \$30 ($n = 26$), and these participants, too, used Qualtrics to register their responses. All participants were presented with a series of questionnaires, targeting their romantic competence, as well other aspects of their relationship, including satisfaction, conflict, and social support. At the completion of the initial surveys,

participants were reminded that a two-week daily diary study would take place in the near future, and that they would receive a random ID number and instructions to take the daily surveys. The specific measures described below, and items for the measures, are presented in Appendix A.

Personality. The Big 5 IPIP Inventory (Goldberg, 1999) was administered to measure personality. The measure is comprised of 50 statements; for each statement, participants rated how much they agreed with it (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) and the scale allowed us to assess the following personality traits: extraversion (e.g., “I am the life of the party”; $M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.89$; $\alpha = .91$), neuroticism (e.g., “I worry about things”; $M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.80$; $\alpha = .87$), agreeableness (e.g., “I feel others’ emotions”; $M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.53$; $\alpha = .81$), conscientiousness (e.g., “I am always prepared”; $M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.73$; $\alpha = .89$), and openness (e.g., “I have a vivid imagination”; $M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.55$; $\alpha = .79$). The IPIP scales correlate highly with other Big 5 scales covering the same traits (John & Srivastava, 1999). Based on pilot data, we expected positive relationships between RC and the traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness.

In addition, we assessed “dark” personality traits, which are marked by callousness and manipulation, using the Short Dark Triad (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). This is a 27-item measure (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) that captures the traits of Machiavellianism (e.g., “It’s wise to keep track of information that you can use against people later”; $M = 2.97$, $SD = .63$; $\alpha = .76$), narcissism (e.g., “I insist on getting the respect I deserve”; $M = 2.98$, $SD = .63$; $\alpha = .77$), and psychopathy (e.g., “I’ll say anything to get what I want”; $M = 2.06$, $SD = .60$; $\alpha = .74$). We predicted that high RC participants would receive lower scores for the dark personality traits.

Attachment Style. The Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR) measure (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998) was used to assess attachment styles. It consisted of 36-items (1 =

strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) asking participants to rate the extent to which they agree with statements pertaining to anxious attachment (e.g., “When my partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else”; $M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.23$; $\alpha = .93$) and avoidant attachment (e.g., “I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close”; $M = 2.07$, $SD = .95$; $\alpha = .91$). Based on pilot data, we predicted inverse relationships between RC and the insecure attachment styles of avoidance and anxiety.

Intelligence. We did not expect RC to be isomorphic with intelligence. To gain some insight into such matters, we asked participants to report their ACT scores ($M = 23.69$, $SD = 4.11$), high school GPA ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.40$), and current college GPA ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.44$). An intelligence score (referred to as “Intelligence”) was computed by averaging the standardized scores of each of these variables ($\alpha = .62$).

Romantic Competence. A measure intended to assess romantic competence (RC) was devised, in which the responses of an individual were used as a method of determining whether the person knows how to respond to relationship challenges, and potentially how successful that person will be as a romantic partner. As opposed to explicitly asking an individual whether or not they think they are a good romantic partner, our measure is derived from the situational judgment test literature (Whetzel & McDaniel, 2009) and consensus scoring techniques (Legree, 1995). There are 10 romantic relationship scenarios, each consisting of challenges and dilemmas that are believable and relatable. Each scenario was accompanied by four potential ways of responding, and participants rated both how effective each response would be (1 = not effective at all, 5 = extremely effective) for the given scenario (RC-E; $M = 0.4143$, $SD = .05$; $\alpha = 0.78$), as well as the likelihood (1 = not at all likely, 5 = extremely likely) that they themselves would engage in that response (RC-S; $M = .3433$, $SD = .07$; $\alpha = .71$). Participant responses were then

scored according to how well they agreed with consensus norms, as described in the introduction. This allows us to give each person an RC-E score and an RC-S score that assess the extent of their relationship knowledge, based on the hypothetical scenarios. The two RC scores were highly correlated with each other ($r = .60, p < .001$), though we anticipated that the RC-S score would be more predictive of actual relationship behaviors.

Satisfaction Measure. Participants were given the Perceived Relationship Quality Components (PRQC) scale (Fletcher et al., 2000), which asks people how much they agree with 18 statements characteristic of high-quality relationships (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely; $M_{Total} = 6.24, SD = .61; \alpha = .92$). The measure can also be scored in terms of individual subscales related to satisfaction (e.g., “How satisfied are you with your relationship?”; $M = 6.38, SD = .72; \alpha = .79$), commitment (e.g., “How committed are you to your relationship?”; $M = 6.68, SD = .56; \alpha = .91$), intimacy (e.g., “How intimate is your relationship?”; $M = 6.15, SD = .94; \alpha = .82$), trust (e.g., “How much do you trust your partner?”; $M = 6.28, SD = .84; \alpha = .82$), passion (e.g., “How passionate is your relationship?”; $M = 5.35, SD = 1.27; \alpha = .81$), and love (e.g., “How much do you love your partner?”; $M = 6.58, SD = .64; \alpha = .83$). We predicted that participants with high RC scores would be more satisfied with their relationships and would trust their partners to a greater extent.

Conflict Measures. Participants completed the Partner Abuse Scale – Non-Physical (PASNP) (Attala et al., 1994), which consists of 25-items (e.g., “I frighten my partner”, “I scream and yell at my partner”) asking participants to indicate how often they engage in abusive, though non-physical, behaviors (1 = none of the time, 7 = all of the time; $M = 1.36, SD = .42; \alpha = .91$). We predicted that people with higher RC scores would engage in these behaviors to a lesser extent. In addition, a Romantic Partner Conflict Scale (RPCS) (Zacchilli et al., 2009) examined

problematic responses to relationship conflict. Participants were presented with 15-items that were rated using an agreement-based scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The RPCS has subscales for avoidance (e.g., “I avoid conflict with my partner”; $M = 3.23$, $SD = .96$; $\alpha = .76$), reactivity (e.g., “My partner and I have frequent fights”; $M = 1.72$, $SD = .58$; $\alpha = .66$), and dominance (e.g., “I try to take control when we argue”; $M = 2.61$, $SD = .99$; $\alpha = .90$). We predicted that reactivity levels, in particular, would be higher among low RC individuals.

Social Support and Self-Efficacy. The Scale of Perceived Social Support (SPSS) (Macdonald, 1998) was used to assess the extent to which participants give and receive different types of social support in their relationship. There are 56-items within 4 subscales (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .96$): emotional (e.g., “I understand my partner”; $M_{Give} = 4.56$, $SD = .42$; $\alpha = .79$; “My partner understands me”; $M_{Receive} = 4.58$, $SD = .51$; $\alpha = .85$), appraisal (e.g., “I praise my partner when they do well”; $M_{Give} = 4.37$, $SD = .45$; $\alpha = .70$; “My partner praises me when I do well”; $M_{Receive} = 4.29$, $SD = .66$; $\alpha = .88$), informational (e.g., “I give my partner guidance and support when it is needed”; $M_{Give} = 4.55$, $SD = .45$; $\alpha = .84$; “My partner gives me guidance and support when I need it”; $M_{Receive} = 4.46$, $SD = .54$; $\alpha = .88$), and instrumental (e.g., “I give my partner practical kinds of help”; $M_{Give} = 4.40$, $SD = .42$; $\alpha = .68$; “My partner gives me practical kinds of help”; $M_{Receive} = 4.32$, $SD = .49$; $\alpha = .74$). The most basic prediction was that high RC individuals should give more social support in their relationships.

In addition, we probed for perceptions of self-efficacy within the relationship using the Self-Efficacy in Romantic Relationships scale (SERR) (Riggio et al., 2011). The SERR consists of 12-items asking participants how strongly they agree with the items, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree ($M = 7.12$, $SD = 1.16$; $\alpha = .84$). Items include “When I make plans in my romantic relationships, I am certain I can make them work” and “I find it difficult to

put effort into maintaining a successful romantic relationship” (reversed). People higher in RC were expected to report greater self-efficacy in their romantic relationships.

Romantic Beliefs. We sought to assess people’s theories of romantic relationships using the important distinction between destiny-related beliefs, a relatively fateful view of relationships, and growth-related beliefs, which allow for relationships to progress over time. We assessed these beliefs using the Implicit Theories of Romantic Relationships Scale (ITRRS) (Knee, 1998), which pairs a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) with an agreement-based format. One subscale focused on destiny beliefs (e.g., “The success of a potential relationship is destined from the very beginning”; $M = 3.74$, $SD = .94$; $\alpha = .84$) and the other focused on growth beliefs (e.g., “Without conflict from time to time, relationships cannot improve”; $M = 5.30$, $SD = .74$; $\alpha = .75$). We thought that high RC participants would endorse theories of relationships based on growth as opposed to destiny.

Coping. A 16-item version of the COPE Inventory (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989) was used to assess how participants tend to regulate emotions and deal with general conflict. The scale asks participants to rate the extent to which they respond to stressors in certain particular ways (1 = I usually don’t do this a lot, 4 = I usually do this a lot). We administered four subscales: active coping (e.g., “I do what has to be done, one step at a time”; $M = 3.03$, $SD = .58$; $\alpha = .69$), denial (e.g., “I pretend that it hasn't really happened”; $M = 1.43$, $SD = .57$; $\alpha = .82$), disengagement (e.g., “I admit to myself that I can't deal with it, and quit trying”; $M = 1.52$, $SD = .52$; $\alpha = .74$), and planning (e.g., “I think hard about what steps to take”; $M = 3.27$, $SD = .60$; $\alpha = .81$). We predicted that people with higher levels of RC would confront their problems head-on rather than denying or disengaging from them.

Partner-Based Procedures and Measures

Partners were emailed a survey to take through Qualtrics, an online system used to take various types of questionnaires and surveys. We hoped to assess some key elements concerning their perceptions of the relationship. The survey was deliberately short and could be completed in approximately 10 minutes. We received partner report data for 98 participants. The measures described below, and items for the measures, are presented in Appendix B.

Satisfaction and Closeness Measures. Romantic partners reported how satisfied they were with the relationship. This measure was embedded in the PRQC (Fletcher et al., 2000), which is described in the participant section. We computed a total score ($M = 6.10$, $SD = .77$; $\alpha = .95$) and a satisfaction-specific score ($M = 6.20$, $SD = .91$; $\alpha = .88$). Partners were also administered the Unidimensional Relationship Closeness Scale (URCS) (Dibble, Levine, & Park, 2012), which assesses how close the partner is to the participant (e.g., “My partner and I have a strong connection”; $M = 6.12$, $SD = .88$; $\alpha = .94$).

Other Measures. Partners were administered a version of the PASNP (Attala et al., 1994) asking them to rate how frequently their partner non-physically abuses them (e.g., “My partner frightens me”, “My partner screams and yells at me”; $M = 1.48$, $SD = .56$; $\alpha = .92$). We predicted that high RC scores would correlate with decreased reports of partner abuse. In addition, partners completed the same version of the SPSS (Macdonald, 1998) as the participants ($M_{Give} = 4.37$, $SD = .42$; $M_{Receive} = 4.33$, $SD = .52$; $\alpha = .97$). We thought that partners would perceive greater levels of social support as RC increased.

Peer-Based Procedures and Measures

Designated peers completed their measures using a peer-based Qualtrics questionnaire. Though there was no formal time limit, peers were expected to take around five minutes to

complete their survey. We deleted peer reports if there was only a single one for a given participant. There were 236 remaining, which corresponded with 86 participants (i.e., the average participant had 2.74 peer reports). Peer-based measures, and the items for them, are presented in Appendix C.

Participant's Relationship History. Designated peers reported on the participant's relationship history, to the best of their ability, with items adapted from the Dating History Questionnaire (Furman et al., 2009). Items included both background questions about the participant's relationships (e.g., "How many romantic relationships do you think your friend has had in his/her lifetime so far?"; $M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.08$; peer agreement $\alpha = .69$) and frequency-based questions about the participant's successful (e.g., "How many successful romantic relationships do you think your friend has had in his/her lifetime so far?"; $M = 1.34$, $SD = .50$; peer agreement $\alpha = .18$) and unsuccessful (e.g., "How many unsuccessful romantic relationships do you think your friend has had in his/her lifetime so far?"; $M = 1.98$, $SD = .94$; peer agreement $\alpha = .58$) romantic relationships from the past.

In addition, we created three Likert-based scales (1 = disagree strongly, 5 = agree strongly). Peers rated whether the target's relationships have been marked by success (e.g., "My friend is successful in romantic relationships"; $M = 3.93$, $SD = .65$; peer agreement $\alpha = .66$; internal reliability $\alpha = .87$), care/support (e.g., "My friend is very supportive in romantic relationships"; $M = 4.48$, $SD = .49$; peer agreement $\alpha = .69$; internal reliability $\alpha = .88$), and conflict (e.g., "My friend has frequent conflicts with his/her romantic partners"; $M = 2.12$, $SD = .66$; peer agreement $\alpha = .31$; internal reliability $\alpha = .90$). We predicted that high RC participants would have peers who rate their relationship histories as more successful.

Participant's Personality. Peers also rated the targets according to the personality traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness because pilot data had suggested personality correlates of this type. They used 5-point scales (1 = not at all true, 5 = extremely true) and there were five items each for agreeableness (e.g., “warm”, “selfish”; $M = 4.16$, $SD = .37$; peer agreement $\alpha = .37$; internal reliability $\alpha = .78$) and conscientiousness (e.g., “organized”, “careless”; $M = 3.96$, $SD = .41$; peer agreement $\alpha = .35$; internal reliability $\alpha = .73$).

Daily Protocol and Measures

After all of the participants completed the lab portion of the study, they were emailed their personal subject ID numbers and the web-link to Qualtrics in order to participate in a daily study. The daily study was modeled after a daily diary protocol, which lasted a total of 14 consecutive days and included event-based predictors and outcomes deemed to be important for relationship functioning (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003). Daily emails were sent out to participants reminding them to take each daily survey, and these emails included the link to the survey as well as participant numbers. Participants were only able to complete the survey between 5:00pm on that day and before 9:00am the next morning. Any survey not taken within this time frame was considered missing. We decided ahead of time that we would only analyze the data from participants who completed at least eight daily reports. The sample size for these analyses ultimately consisted of 85 participants ($M_{Days} = 12.95$, $SD = 1.51$). The daily diary protocol described below, and items for the protocol, are presented in Appendix D.

We included three event-based (“level 1”) predictors in order to see whether people differ in reactivity to daily events (see the Appendix for a complete list of items). We asked participants to record the frequency with which their partners engaged in supportive behaviors (“my partner supported me today”, “my partner helped me with a problem today”, and “my

partner listened to me today”), where 0 = not a single time and 3 = more than two times ($M = 2.67$, $SD = .89$; $\alpha = .81$). Participants were also instructed to record how many times their partner provoked them (“my partner criticized me today”, “my partner treated me unfairly today”, “my partner argued with me today”) using the same scale ($M = 1.23$, $SD = .46$; $\alpha = .80$). Finally, participants took note of the amount of interaction they had with their partners on a daily basis. To obtain a comprehensive indication of this, participants indicated whether (No = 1, Yes = 2) they had spent time with their partner, texted their partner, talked to their partner, did an activity with their partner, went on a date with their partner, or engaged in romantic physical activity with their partner on a given day ($M = 1.64$, $SD = .27$; $\alpha = .73$). These items were averaged and scored in a direction where a higher score indicated more time spent with the partner.

We were also interested to see whether RC had overall influences on some daily outcomes; these predictions involved level 2 main effects (Singer, 1998). To measure feelings of daily relationship satisfaction, participants were asked to what extent (1 = not at all, 5 = extremely) they were satisfied with each of the following on that day: “your partner”, “your relationship”, and “your time with your partner” ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 1.00$; $\alpha = .88$). Another set of items sought to measure relationship behaviors. Participants were asked to report on the extent to which they engaged in prosocial behaviors (“helped my partner”, “forgave my partner”, and “comforted my partner”; $M = 1.86$, $SD = .67$; $\alpha = .75$) and antisocial behaviors (“argued with my partner”, “insulted my partner”, and “criticized my partner”; $M = 1.19$, $SD = .36$; $\alpha = .77$) on each day. We entertained the possibility that people higher in RC would exhibit greater prosociality (and less antisociality) on the average day.

In addition to the measures described above, we had several feeling-based measures. Participants indicated how caring (“caring towards my partner”, “friendly towards my partner”,

and “sympathetic towards my partner”; $M = 3.79$, $SD = .95$; $\alpha = .82$) and angry (“irritated towards my partner”, “angry at my partner”, and “annoyed at my partner”; $M = 1.38$, $SD = .68$; $\alpha = .89$) they felt towards the romantic partner, using a Likert scale where 1 = not at all and 5 = extremely. We also assessed more generalized feelings of positive affect (“today, I felt excited” and “today, I felt enthusiastic”; $M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.10$; $\alpha = .89$) and negative affect (“today, I felt distressed” and “today, I felt nervous”; $M = 2.17$, $SD = .99$; $\alpha = .73$). In addition to investigating the possibility of level 2 main effects, we will also explore several cross-level interactions involving these variables.

RESULTS

Self-Report Outcomes

Figure 1 graphs RC-S scores as a function of RC-E scores. As shown in the figure, there tended to be a linear relationship between the two variables such that people with greater effectiveness knowledge were more likely to respond to the scenarios in an effective manner. However, a closer inspection of the scatterplot reveals an interesting dissociation. No one with high RC-E scores obtained higher RC-S scores. By contrast, there were some people with high RC-E scores that obtained lower RC-S scores. That is, some people had knowledge that they themselves would not act on, perhaps because the indicated action was more direct than they typically feel comfortable with.

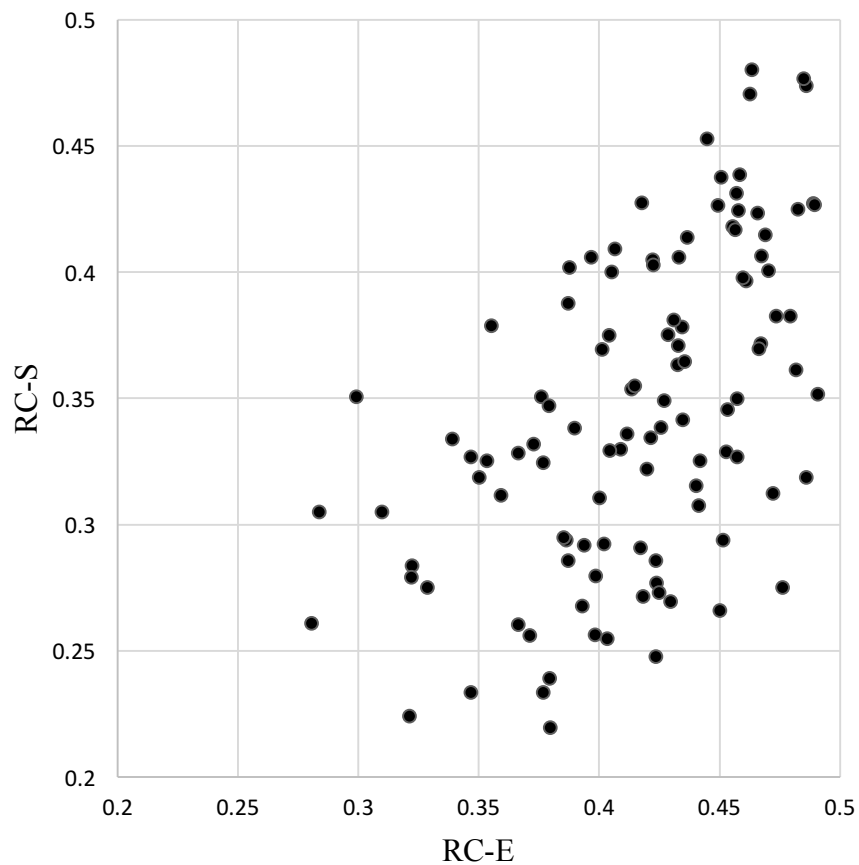


Figure 1. RC-S Scores as a Function of RC-E Scores

There was good evidence that people with higher RC scores had better relationships. The relevant zero-order correlations for these analyses are reported in Table 2, as are zero-order correlations for the peer and partner outcomes, though key correlations will also be highlighted in the text. As predicted, there were positive relationships between RC levels and romantic satisfaction (RC-E: $r = .13, p = .093$; RC-S: $r = .37, p < .001$) as well as overall relationship quality (RC-E: $r = .17, p = .076$; RC-S: $r = .32, p < .001$). In addition, there was a negative relationship between RC levels and reactivity to conflict (RC-E: $r = -.08, p = .428$; RC-S: $r = -.36, p < .001$) and people with higher RC levels were less likely to direct non-physical abuse towards the partner (RC-E: $r = -.20, p = .030$; RC-S: $r = -.24, p = .012$). In terms of social support, our hypotheses were supported, in that people with high RC scores tended to both give and receive more social support. For example, RC correlated positively with provided emotional support to the partner (RC-E: $r = .15, p = .113$; RC-S: $r = .30, p = .001$), and also with perceived emotional support from the partner (RC-E: $r = .09, p = .319$; RC-S: $r = .25, p = .009$).

A number of other correlations are worth highlighting. People with higher RC scores had lower destiny beliefs (RC-E: $r = -.28, p = .003$; RC-S: $r = -.22, p = .018$), consistent with the idea of having control over relationship outcomes. People with higher RC levels also appeared to have a more proactive approach to stressors in more general terms. For example, RC correlated positively with planning (RC-E: $r = .31, p = .001$; RC-S: $r = .15, p = .124$) and negatively with denial (RC-E: $r = -.26, p = .007$; RC-S: $r = -.31, p = .001$). One other observation worth noting is that the correlations tended to be stronger and more consistently significant for the RC-S measure than the RC-E measure.

To further investigate these observations concerning the zero-order correlations, we performed multiple regressions in which we entered both RC-E and RC-S scores as predictors of

Table 2

Zero-order Correlations Between RC-E and RC-S and Outcomes

Outcome	RC-E	RC-S
<i>Participant-Based</i>		
Sex	0.31***	0.124
Intelligence	0.17	0.12
Extraversion	-0.11	-0.08
Neuroticism	-0.08	-0.33***
Openness	0.02	0.07
Agreeableness	0.21*	0.18
Conscientiousness	0.17	0.22*
ECR		
Anxious	-0.10	-0.36***
Avoidant	-0.19*	-0.30**
PRQC		
Satisfaction	0.13	0.37***
Commitment	0.09	0.17
Intimacy	0.16	0.30***
Trust	0.19*	0.32***
Passion	0.04	0.10
Love	0.18	0.21*
Total	0.17	0.32***
RPCS		
Avoidance	-0.11	-0.14
Reactivity	-0.08	-0.36***
Dominance	-0.27**	-0.40***
PASNP	-0.20*	-0.24*
SERR	0.23*	0.32***
SPSS		
Give Emotional Support	0.15	0.30***
Giving Appraisal Support	0.16	0.27**
Giving Informational Support	0.17	0.17
Giving Instrumental Support	0.01	0.10
Receiving Emotional Support	0.09	0.25**
Receiving Appraisal Support	0.07	0.27**
Receiving Informational Support	0.13	0.21*
Receiving Instrumental Support	0.09	0.30***
Destiny Belief	-0.28**	-0.22*
Growth Belief	0.01	-0.002

Note: Displayed above are all (non-daily) zero-order correlations between RC-E and the outcomes as well as between RC-S and the outcomes. * = < .05, ** < .01, *** = < .001.

Table 2. Zero-order Correlations Between RC-E and RC-S and Outcomes (continued)

Outcome	RC-E	RC-S
Machiavellianism	-0.50***	-0.41***
Narcissism	-0.22*	-0.08
Psychopathy	-0.36***	-0.32***
COPE		
Active	0.12	0.08
Denial	-0.26**	-0.31***
Disengagement	-0.23*	-0.37***
Planning	0.31***	0.15
<i>Partner-Based</i>		
Sex	-0.33***	-0.12
PRQC		
Satisfaction	0.10	0.10
Total	0.04	0.07
UCRS	0.01	0.08
PASNP	-0.18	-0.13
SPSS		
Giving Social Support	-.04	-.05
Receiving Social Support	.07	.07
Conflict	-0.25*	-0.31**
<i>Peer-Based</i>		
Participant Personality		
Agreeableness	0.25*	0.165
Conscientiousness	0.13	0.09
Relationship Quantity		
Number of Relationships	-0.07	-0.12
Successful Relationships	-0.14	-0.14
Unsuccessful Relationships	-0.22*	-0.20
Relationship Quality		
Success	0.23*	0.09
Care	0.10	0.07
Conflict	-0.25*	-0.31**

Note: Displayed above are all (non-daily) zero-order correlations between RC-E and the outcomes as well as between RC-S and the outcomes. * = < .05, ** = < .01, *** = < .001.

the outcomes, as shown in Table 3. When controlling for RC-E levels, RC-S scores continued to predict the key outcomes, including romantic satisfaction ($t = 4.10, p < .001; \beta = .45$), overall relationship quality ($t = 3.07, p = .003; \beta = .35$), and decreased reactivity ($t = -4.48, p < .001; \beta = -.49$). RC-E, on the other hand, failed to predict these romantic outcomes when RC-S was

controlled. Thus, it is possible that RC-S has some unique ability in predicting positive romantic outcomes in comparison to RC-E.

Table 3

Multiple Regression Results with RC-E and RC-S Simultaneously Controlled

Outcome	RC-E		RC-S	
	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β
<i>Participant-Based</i>				
PRQC				
Satisfaction	-1.27	-.14	4.10***	.45
Commitment	-.21	-.02	1.61	.19
Intimacy	-.28	-.03	2.79**	.32
Trust	-.10	-.01	2.93**	.33
Passion	-.31	-.04	1.05	.12
Love	.73	-.09	1.35	.16
Total	-.35	-.04	3.07**	.35
RPCS				
Avoidance	-.28	-.03	-1.04	-.12
Reactivity	2.00*	.22	-4.48***	-.49
Dominance	-.47	-.05	-3.38***	-.37
PASNP	-.84	-.10	-1.55	-.18
SERR	.50	.06	2.54*	.29
SPSS				
Give Emotional Support	-.40	-.05	2.87**	.33
Giving Appraisal Support	.05	.01	2.31*	.27
Giving Informational Support	.85	.10	.94	.11
Giving Instrumental Support	-.58	-.07	1.10	.13
Receiving Emotional Support	-.71	-.08	2.55*	.29
Receiving Appraisal Support	-1.26	-.14	3.16**	.36
Receiving Informational Support	.03	.003	1.76	.20
Receiving Instrumental Support	-1.24	-.14	3.39***	.38
Destiny Belief	-1.99*	-.23	-.75	-.09
Growth Belief	.10	.01	-.08	-.01
Machiavellianism	-3.91***	-.40	-1.71	-.17
Narcissism	-2.39*	-.28	.81	.09
Psychopathy	-2.37*	-.27	-1.45	-.16

Note: Displayed above are results of multiple regression analyses, with both RC-E and RC-S as simultaneous predictors of each outcome. The RC-E column controls for RC-S and the RC-S column controls for RC-E. * = < .05, ** = < .01, *** = < .001.

Table 3. *Multiple Regression Results with RC-E and RC-S Simultaneously Controlled (continued)*

Outcome	RC-E		RC-S	
	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β
COPE				
Active	.98	.12	.07	.01
Denial	-.97	-.11	-.209*	-.24
Disengagement	.01	.001	-3.30**	-.37
Planning	3.03**	.35	-.56	-.06
<i>Partner-Based</i>				
PRQC				
Satisfaction	.51	.06	.56	.07
Total	.01	.001	.55	.07
UCRS	-.43	-.05	.91	.11
PASNP	-1.28	-.15	-.37	-.04
SPSS				
Giving Social Support	-.11	-.01	-.35	-.04
Receiving Social Support	.35	.04	.39	.05
<i>Peer-Based</i>				
Participant Personality				
Agreeableness	1.76	.23	.30	.04
Conscientiousness	.88	.12	.18	.02
Relationship Quantity				
Number of Relationships	-.03	-.003	-.91	-.12
Successful Relationships	-.75	-.10	-.62	-.08
Unsuccessful Relationships	-1.20	-.16	-.87	-.11
Relationship Quality				
Success	2.00*	.26	-.45	-.06
Care	.63	.08	.318	.02
Conflict	-.98	-.12	-1.89	-.24

Note: Displayed above are results of multiple regression analyses, with both RC-E and RC-S as simultaneous predictors of each outcome. The RC-E column controls for RC-S and the RC-S column controls for RC-E. * = $< .05$, ** = $< .01$, *** = $< .001$.

We next examined the personality profile of RC. People receiving higher RC scores were more agreeable (RC-E: $r = .21, p = .023$; RC-S: $r = .18, p = .052$), more conscientious (RC-E: $r = .17, p = .070$; RC-S: $r = .22, p = .021$), and less neurotic (RC-E: $r = -.08, p = .406$; RC-S: $r = -.33, p < .001$). Because the neuroticism-related correlations were so discrepant from each other, with a stronger relationship with RC-S than RC-E, we decided to do a follow-up analysis.

Controlling for RC-E levels, neuroticism continued to predict RC-S scores in a multiple regression ($t = -4.03, p < .001; \beta = -.29$). This suggests that neurotic people engage in less effective behaviors even when they have the same effectiveness knowledge. Results of this type could provide some insights into personality trait operations in future research.

We thought it possible that there would be negative relationships between RC and the dark personality traits of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. These hypotheses were supported, especially for the latter two traits, in that people with higher RC levels had lower levels of Machiavellianism (RC-E: $r = -.50, p < .001$; RC-S: $r = -.41, p < .001$) and psychopathy (RC-E: $r = -.36, p < .001$; RC-S: $r = -.32, p < .001$). These results are consistent with the idea that people with dark traits prioritize themselves over potential relationship partners, which would undermine their competence in romantic relationships.

To obtain a more detailed perspective of how RC and personality are individually impacting relationships, we ran multiple regression analyses in which we controlled for the Big 5 personality traits, separately so for RC-E/outcome and RC-S/outcome relationships. We limited these analyses to the most central outcomes and/or those for which RC was a significant predictor, and the results are shown in Table 4. After controlling for Big 5 personality, RC-S remained a significant predictor of romantic satisfaction ($t = 3.57, p < .001; \beta = .36$), overall relationship quality ($t = 3.25, p = .002; \beta = .33$), and decreased reactivity ($t = -2.81, p = .006; \beta = -.28$). RC-S also remained a significant predictor of several other outcomes, including giving emotional support to one's partner ($t = 2.70, p = .008; \beta = .27$). We conclude that individual differences in RC-S have discriminant validity with respect to personality.

To further examine whether RC-S/outcome relationships are contingent on one's personality, we ran analyses in which we examined the possibility of RC by personality

Table 4

Multiple Regression Results after Controlling for the Big 5 Personality Traits

Outcome	RC-E		RC-S	
	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β
<i>Participant-Based</i>				
PRQC				
Satisfaction	.98	.10	3.57***	.36
Intimacy	1.32	.13	2.66**	.28
Trust	1.82	.18	3.15**	.32
Love	1.63	.16	2.33*	.25
Total	1.60	.16	3.25**	.33
RPCS				
Reactivity	.04	.004	-2.81**	-.28
Dominance	-2.44**	-.23	-3.82***	-.37
PASNP	-1.70	-.16	-1.45	-.14
SERR	1.82	.16	2.53*	.24
SPSS				
Give Emotional Support	1.00	.10	2.70**	.27
Giving Appraisal Support	1.21	.11	2.58*	.25
Receiving Emotional Support	.82	.08	2.69**	.28
Receiving Appraisal Support	.41	.04	2.96**	.30
Machiavellianism	-5.37***	-.45	-4.25***	-.39
Psychopathy	-2.88**	-.25	-2.05*	-.20
COPE				
Denial	-2.58*	-.24	-2.33*	-.24
Disengagement	-2.15*	-.18	-2.80**	-.25
Planning	3.59***	.30	.49	.05
<i>Peer-Based</i>				
Participant Personality				
Agreeableness	1.95	.20	.24	.03
Relationship Quality				
Success	1.85	.20	.25	.03
Conflict	-2.12*	-.23	-1.82	-.22

Note: Personality was assessed using a Goldberg (1999) inventory. Separate multiple regressions were performed for RC-E as a predictor and for RC-S as a predictor. * = < .05, ** < .01, *** = < .001.

interactions, with personality defined as agreeableness, conscientiousness, or neuroticism.

Although many of these analyses were performed, none of the interactions were significant ($ps > .05$). The beneficial effects of RC-S are therefore not dependent on one's personality.

Similar to pilot data findings, people with higher RC levels tended to be more secure in their attachment style, in that there were inverse relationships with anxious attachment (RC-E: $r = -.10, p = .27$; RC-S: $r = -.36, p < .001$) and avoidant attachment (RC-E: $r = -.19, p = .04$; RC-S: $r = -.30, p < .001$). Accordingly, we performed another series of regressions in which we examined RC-E/outcome and RC-S/outcome relationships when controlling for the two attachment style predictors (see Table 5). The RC-S measure, but not the RC-E measure, continued to predict romantic satisfaction ($t = 2.89, p = .005; \beta = .25$), overall relationship quality ($t = 2.11, p = .037; \beta = .19$), and reactivity ($t = -2.76, p = .007; \beta = .26$).

Another possibility was that attachment style would moderate the impact of RC levels. To address this possibility, we ran a series of multiple regressions in which we added interaction terms to model RC by attachment style dependencies (Aiken & West, 1991). None of these were significant. Thus, the benefits of RC are not dependent on having a certain attachment style.

Some pilot results suggested the real possibility of sex differences, with women receiving higher RC scores than men. In the present research, a significant sex difference was observed for RC-E scores ($t = -3.39, p = .001$) but not RC-S scores ($t = -1.32, p = .191$), with women receiving higher RC-E scores ($M = .4264, SD = .0548$) than men ($M = .3930, SD = .0415$). We then ran a large number of multiple regressions to see whether there were RC by sex interactions, and only one interaction was significant. Thus, the RC scale seems to measure relevant romantic skills among both men and women.

Peer Report Outcomes

Table 2 reports correlations between the RC scores and peer-based judgments. A number of the correlations were significant, and the correlations that were significant always had the predicted direction. However, there is another point worth making. The RC-E scores predicted a

Table 5

Multiple Regression Results after Controlling for Attachment Style

Outcome	RC-E		RC-S	
	<i>t</i>	β	<i>t</i>	β
<i>Participant-Based</i>				
PRQC				
Satisfaction	.39	.03	2.89**	.25
Intimacy	.91	.08	2.19*	.20
Trust	1.13	.10	1.93	.17
Love	1.02	.09	.91	.08
Total	.85	.07	2.11*	.19
RPCS				
Reactivity	-.11	-.001	-2.76**	-.26
Dominance	-2.48**	-.26	-3.90**	-.37
PASNP	-1.64	-.15	-1.10	-.11
SERR	1.40	.10	1.69	.13
SPSS				
Give Emotional Support	.60	.05	1.51	.13
Giving Appraisal Support	1.14	.10	1.97	.19
Receiving Emotional Support	-.30	-.02	.63	.05
Receiving Appraisal Support	-.20	-.02	1.26	.12
Machiavellianism	-5.89***	-.50	-4.34***	-.42
Psychopathy	-3.77***	-.34	-2.93**	-.30
COPE				
Denial	-2.43*	-.23	-2.43*	-.24
Disengagement	-2.04*	-.19	-3.39***	-.33
Planning	2.93**	.27	.71	.07
<i>Peer-Based</i>				
Participant Personality				
Agreeableness	2.09*	.23	1.31	.17
Relationship Quality				
Success	1.39	.14	-.99	-.11
Conflict	-2.07*	-.23	-2.41	-.30

Note: Attachment style was assessed using the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998). Distinct multiple regression sets were performed for RC-E and RC-S. * = < .05, ** = < .01, *** = < .001.

number of the peer-based outcomes, but there was only one significant correlation involving RC-S scores. It is possible that peers base their impressions more greatly on knowledge than specific behavioral acts, thus rendering the RC-E scale more pertinent to peer impressions.

Considering the personality variables, peers thought that targets with higher RC-E scores were more agreeable ($r = .25, p = .022$) in their personality functioning. This correlation directly replicates a similar relationship with self-reported levels of agreeableness. Peers thought that people with low RC-E scores had a greater number of unsuccessful relationships in their lifetime ($r = -.22, p = .045$), and the direction of this relationship makes sense. Finally, there was a positive relationship between RC-E scores and perceived success in relationships ($r = .23, p = .038$) as well as a negative correlation between RC-E scores and perceptions of relationship conflict ($r = -.25, p = .019$). Thus, RC's predictive validity is not limited to self-outcomes; RC levels also impact cues that are available to others.

When controlling for RC-S, RC-E remained a significant predictor of perceived relationship success ($t = 2.00, p = .049; \beta = .26$). The remainder of these multiple regression results are displayed in Table 3. When controlling for personality, RC-E scores continued to predict perceived conflict ($t = -2.12, p = .037; \beta = -.23$), but not perceived relationship success ($t = 1.85, p = .068; \beta = .20$). Lastly, when attachment style was controlled, RC-E predicted perceived conflict ($t = -2.07, p = .042; \beta = -.23$), but not perceived success ($t = 1.39, p = .168; \beta = .14$). The remainder of these results are presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Partner Report Outcomes

RC did not have any significant correlations with any of the partner outcomes. Particularly disappointing, RC did not predict partner reported satisfaction (RC-E: $r = .10, p = .326$; RC-S: $r = .10, p = .313$), partner perceptions of relationship quality (RC-E: $r = .04, p = .710$; RC-S: $r = .07, p = .504$), or experienced non-physical abuse (RC-E: $r = -.18, p = .081$; RC-S: $r = -.13, p = .212$). The remainder of these correlations are displayed in Table 2. In

considering the null results, it is possible that one would need to control for variables such as personality and attachment style of the partner. However, we did not have this information.

RC-S as a Mediator of Anxious Attachment and Outcomes

People with insecure attachment styles tend to have less successful relationships. It is possible that one reason for this is that insecure attachment styles undermine RC. For example, avoidant people may have fewer intimate experiences, rendering them less capable in relationships. In support of these ideas, people with an anxious attachment style received lower RC-S scores, as did people with an avoidant attachment style (see Table 2). In the following two sections, we consider these mediation-related ideas in relation to four key outcomes: romantic satisfaction, relationship quality, reactivity, and non-physical abuse towards the partner. For these analyses, we used the SAS-based PROCESS macro of Hayes (2013), with each of the variables *z*-scored to aid magnitude interpretation (Krishnakumar & Robinson, 2015).

Anxiety → *RC-S* → *Satisfaction*. The first model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between anxious attachment and relationship satisfaction. Consistent with this possibility, anxious attachment was a significant predictor of RC-S (pathway $a = -.36, p < .001$) as well as satisfaction (pathway $c = -.21, p = .027$). When RC-S and anxious attachment were entered as simultaneous predictors of satisfaction, RC-S remained a significant predictor (pathway $b = .36, p < .001$), whereas anxious attachment was no longer a significant predictor (pathway $c' = -.09, p = .353$). We then sought to determine the significance of the mediational pathway more directly, following the recommendations of Hayes (2013). Specifically, PROCESS computed a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BCCI) for the mediational (ab) pathway using 10,000 bootstrap samples. The mean estimate for this pathway was $-.12$ with a 95% BCCI of $-.12$ to $-.06$. Because this BCCI excluded zero, we can conclude that the

mediational pathway was significant (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). That is, a significant portion of the effect of anxious attachment on satisfaction was mediated by RC-S. For comparison purposes, the calculated mean estimate for the c' pathway was $-.09$, with a 95% BCCI of $-.28$ to $.10$, indicating that anxious attachment did not predict relationship satisfaction for reasons other than RC-S. Indeed, a comparison of the ab and c pathways (Hayes, 2013) revealed that 57% of the effect of anxious attachment on relationship satisfaction, relative to the total effect (c), was mediated by RC-S. Thus, the tendency for people with an anxious attachment to have lower levels of RC accounts for the majority of their decreased relationship satisfaction. Figure 2 graphs the results of these analyses.

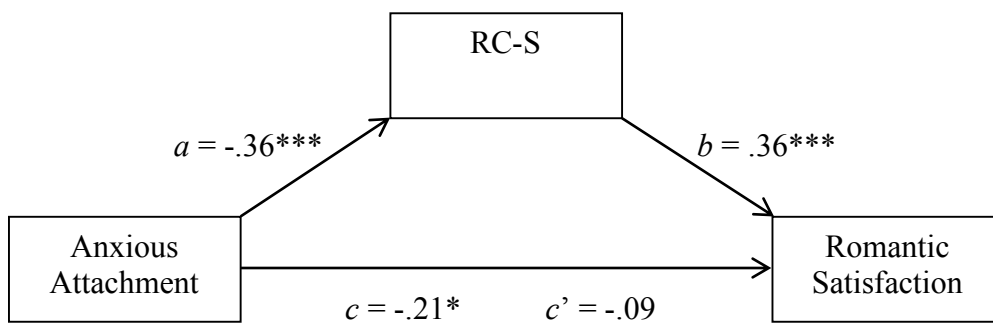


Figure 2. RC-S as a Mediator of Anxious Attachment and Romantic Satisfaction

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Anxiety → *RC-S* → *Quality*. The second model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between anxious attachment and relationship quality. Anxious attachment was a significant predictor of both RC-S (pathway $a = -.36$, $p < .001$) and relationship quality (pathway $c = -.15$, $p = .010$). When RC-S and anxious attachment were both accounted for as predictors, RC-S remained a significant predictor for relationship quality (pathway $b = .16$, $p = .006$), whereas anxious attachment was no longer significant (pathway $c' = -.09$, $p = .132$). Using 10,000 bootstrap samples, PROCESS computed a 95% BCCI for the mediational pathway (ab) of $-.13$ to $-.02$ ($M = -.06$). Because this BCCI excluded zero, we can conclude that the

mediational pathway was significant (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). The 95% BCCI for the c' pathway was -.20 to .03 ($M = -.09$). A comparison of the ab and c pathways (Hayes, 2013) revealed that 29% of the total pathway was mediated. Thus, the tendency for people with an anxious attachment to have lower levels of RC accounts for a portion of their decreased relationship quality. Figure 3 graphs the results of these analyses.

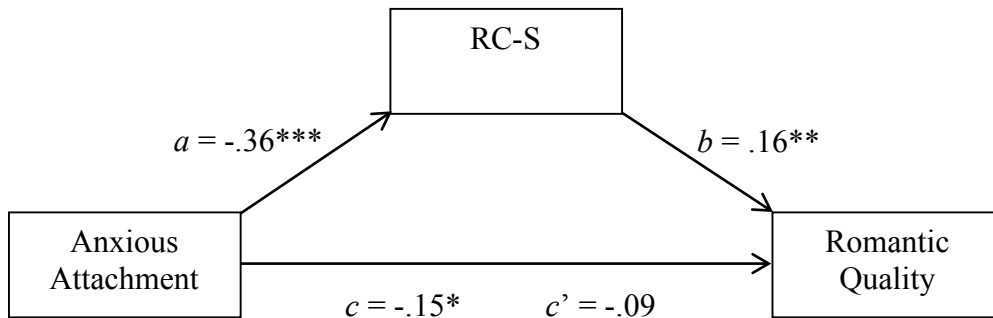


Figure 3. RC-S as a Mediator of Anxious Attachment and Romantic Quality
 Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Anxiety → *RC-S* → *Reactivity*. The third model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between anxious attachment and reactivity during relationship conflict. Anxious attachment was a significant predictor of both RC-S (pathway $a = -.36, p < .001$) and reactivity (pathway $c = .28, p = .003$). Anxious attachment no longer remained a significant predictor of reactivity (pathway $c' = .18, p = .064$) when the variance of RC-S was controlled, whereas RC-S did (pathway $b = -.30, p = .002$) when anxious attachment was controlled. The 95% BCCI for the mediational (ab) pathway was .03 to .22 ($M = .11$), suggesting significant mediation (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). The 95% BCCI for the direct (c') pathway was -.01 to .36 ($M = .18$), suggesting that RC-S completely mediated the relationship between anxious attachment and conflict reactivity. As recommended by Hayes (2013), a comparison of the ab and c pathways disclosed that 39% of the total pathway was mediated. Thus, the tendency for people with an

anxious attachment to have lower levels of RC accounts for a portion of their increased reactivity. Figure 4 graphs the results of these analyses.

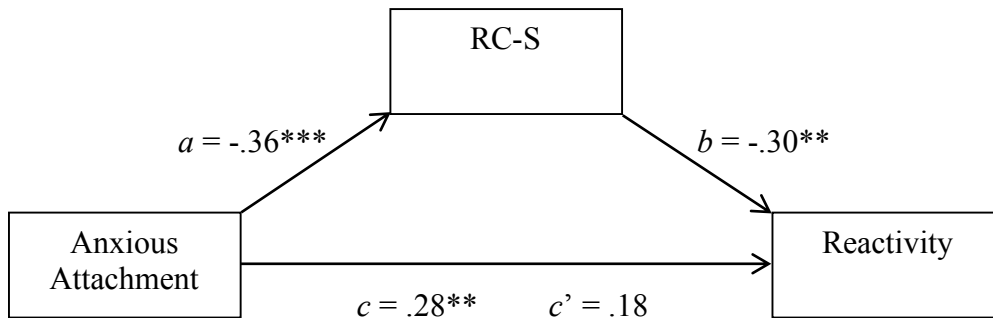


Figure 4. RC-S as a Mediator of Anxious Attachment and Reactivity

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Anxiety → *RC-S* → *Abuse*. The fourth model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between anxious attachment and non-physical abuse towards the partner. Though anxious attachment predicted both RC-S (pathway $a = -.36, p < .001$) and reactivity (pathway $c = .33, p < .001$), RC-S was not a predictor of partner abuse (pathway $b = -.14, p = .150$). Since there was no b pathway, there was no mediating role for RC-S.

RC-S as a Mediator of Avoidant Attachment and Outcomes

We next conducted a series of four models to determine whether RC-S mediated the effects of an avoidant attachment style. For these analyses too, all of the variables were z -scored to aid magnitude interpretation and we used the PROCESS procedures of Hayes (2013).

Avoidance → *RC-S* → *Satisfaction*. The first model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between avoidant attachment and relationship satisfaction. Avoidant attachment was found to be a predictor of RC-S (pathway $a = -.30, p = .002$) and romantic satisfaction (pathway $c = -.51, p < .001$). When avoidant attachment and RC-S were put in the same regression, both RC-S (pathway $b = .24, p = .005$) and avoidant attachment (pathway $c' = -.44, p < .001$) remained significant predictors of satisfaction. To determine the significance of the mediational

pathway, PROCESS computed a 95% BCCI for the indirect effect (ab) using 10,000 samples, which was -.15 to -.03 ($M = -.07$). Since zero was excluded from the BCCI, we can conclude that a significant portion of the effect of anxious attachment on satisfaction was mediated by RC-S (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). The 95% BCCI for the direct (c') pathway was -.61 to -.28 ($M = -.44$), indicating that avoidant attachment also predicted relationship satisfaction for other reasons besides RC-S. Indeed, a comparison of the ab and c pathways (Hayes, 2013) revealed that 14% of the effect of avoidant attachment on relationship satisfaction, relative to the total effect (c), was mediated by RC-S. Therefore, it appeared that low RC-S levels partially accounted for the inverse relationship between avoidant attachment and satisfaction. Figure 5 graphs the results of these analyses.

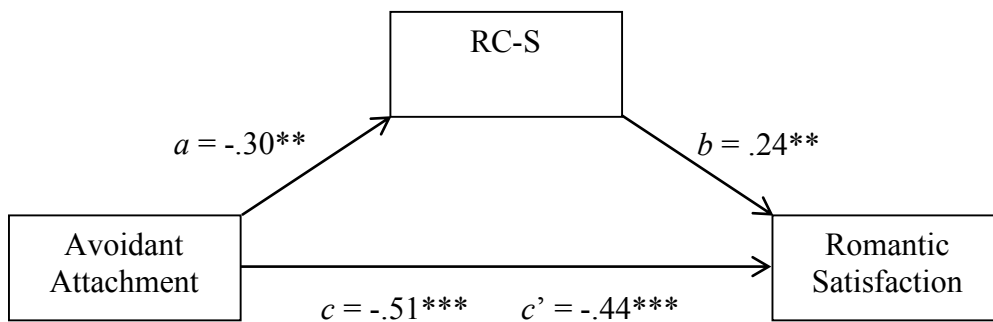


Figure 5. RC-S as a Mediator of Avoidant Attachment and Romantic Satisfaction
 Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Avoidance \rightarrow *RC-S* \rightarrow *Quality*. The second model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between avoidant attachment and relationship quality. We found that avoidant attachment significantly predicted RC-S (pathway $a = -.30$, $p = .002$) and relationship satisfaction (pathway $c = -.30$, $p < .001$). Accounting for both RC-S and avoidant attachment, relationship quality was still significantly predicted by RC-S (pathway $b = .12$, $p = .026$) and avoidant attachment (pathway $c' = -.27$, $p < .001$). A 95% BCCI, computed by PROCESS, resulted in indirect pathway (ab) estimates of -.09 to -.01 ($M = -.03$), which provides support for

a significant mediational pathway, as zero is excluded (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). Further, a 95% BCCI for the direct (c') pathway was -.37 to -.17 ($M = -.27$), and thus mediation was not complete. A comparison between the ab and c pathways (Hayes, 2013) showed that 12% of the variance was mediated. Thus, the likelihood of engaging in ineffective romantic behaviors is in part responsible for decreased relationship quality experienced by individuals with an avoidant attachment. Figure 6 graphs the results of these analyses.

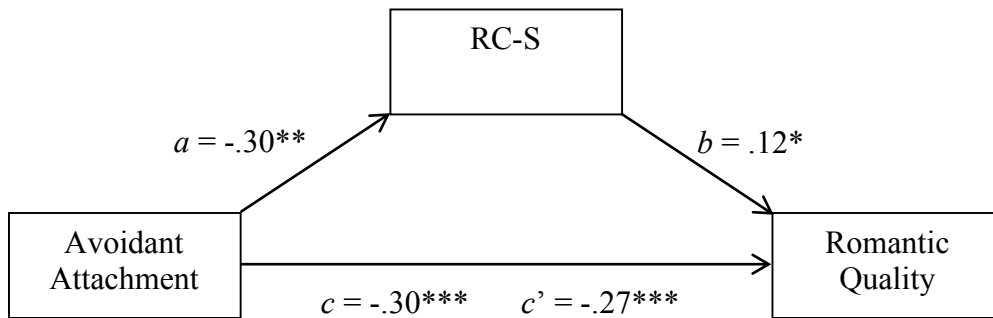


Figure 6. RC-S as a Mediator of Avoidant Attachment and Romantic Quality

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Avoidance \rightarrow *RC-S* \rightarrow *Reactivity*. The third model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between avoidant attachment and reactivity during relationship conflict. We found that avoidant attachment significantly predicted RC-S (pathway $a = -.30$, $p = .002$) and relationship satisfaction (pathway $c = .31$, $p = .001$). When both RC-S and avoidant attachment were treated as predictors, RC-S significantly predicted conflict reactivity (pathway $b = -.29$, $p = .002$), as did avoidant attachment (pathway $c' = .22$, $p = .018$). To further determine the significance of the indirect (ab) pathway, we used PROCESS to compute a 95% BCCI, which produced the values of .03 to .19 ($M = .09$). Since zero was excluded, the mediation is significant, meaning that RC-S is at least partly responsible for the relationship between avoidant attachment and conflict reactivity (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). A follow-up analysis obtained the 95% BCCI of the direct (c') pathway, which was .04 to .40 ($M = .22$), indicating

partial mediation. According to an analysis comparing the *ab* and *c* pathways (Hayes, 2013), RC-S mediated 28% of the variance. Thus, low RC-S is partially the reason that people with avoidant attachments tend to engage in more reactive behaviors when faced with conflict. Figure 7 graphs the results of these analyses.

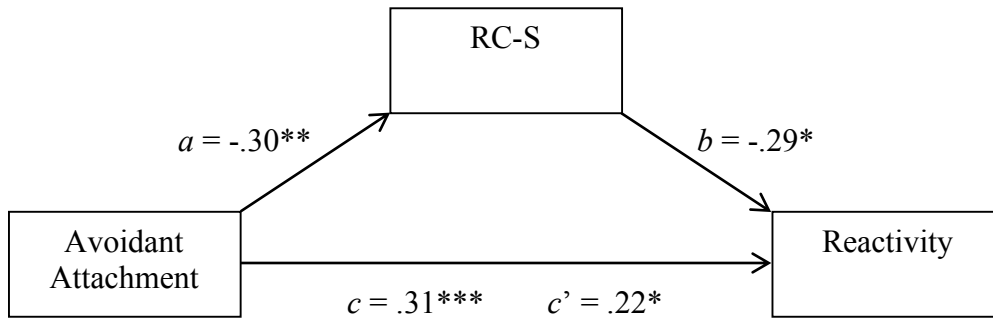


Figure 7. RC-S as a Mediator of Avoidant Attachment and Reactivity

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Avoidance \rightarrow *RC-S* \rightarrow *Abuse*. The fourth model examined whether RC-S mediated the relationship between avoidant attachment and non-physical abuse towards the partner. Avoidant attachment significantly predicted RC-S (pathway $a = -.30, p = .002$) and partner abuse (pathway $c = .28, p = .003$). However, RC-S did not significantly predict partner abuse when avoidant attachment was controlled (pathway $b = -.17, p = .075$). Thus, RC-S did not play a mediating role in the relationship between avoidant attachment and non-physical partner abuse.

Romantic Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of RC-S and Outcomes

People with higher levels of RC-S are likely to receive positive feedback in their relationships, which may bolster their sense of self-efficacy. And, because relationship self-efficacy tends to be valuable, such a mediational pathway could in part explain why RC-S predicted some of the relationship outcomes that it did. Accordingly, we ran a series of four models to examine whether romantic self-efficacy could serve as a mediator in accounting for some of the benefits of RC-S.

RC-S → *Self-Efficacy* → *Satisfaction*. The first model examined whether romantic self-efficacy mediated the relationship between RC-S and romantic satisfaction. RC-S significantly predicted romantic self-efficacy (pathway $a = .32, p < .001$) and romantic satisfaction (pathway $c = .37, p < .001$). When both self-efficacy and RC-S were treated as predictors, both self-efficacy (pathway $b = .52, p < .001$) and RC-S (pathway $c' = .20, p = .013$) continued to significantly predict satisfaction. We then sought to determine the significance of the mediational pathway more directly, and used PROCESS to compute a 95% BCCI for the mediational (ab) pathway, which was .07 to .29 ($M = .17$). Because this BCCI excluded zero, we can conclude that the mediational pathway was significant, or that a significant portion of the RC effect on satisfaction was mediated by self-efficacy (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). The 95% BCCI for the direct (c') pathway was .04 to .36 ($M = .20$), indicating that RC-S also predicted relationship satisfaction for other reasons besides self-efficacy. A comparison of the ab and c pathways (Hayes, 2013) revealed that 45% of the effect of RC-S on relationship satisfaction, relative to the total effect (c), was mediated by self-efficacy. Thus, the tendency for high RC people to be more self-efficacious accounts for some, but not all of their greater relationship satisfaction. Figure 8 graphs the results of these analyses.

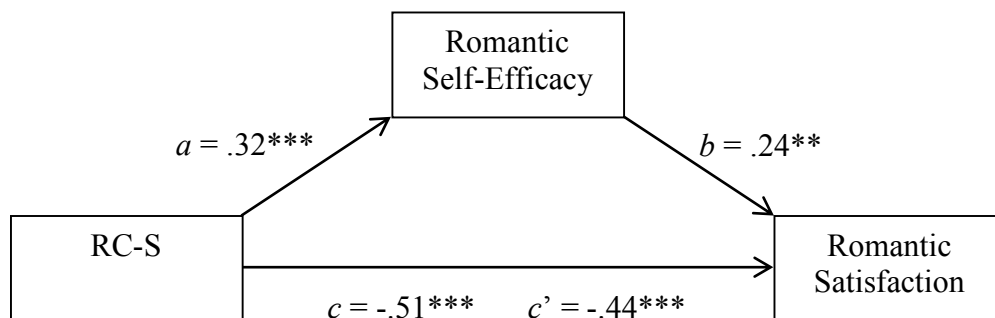


Figure 8. Romantic Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of RC-S and Romantic Satisfaction
 Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

RC-S → *Self-Efficacy* → *Quality*. The second model examined whether romantic self-efficacy mediated the relationship between RC-S and romantic quality. RC-S was significantly related to romantic self-efficacy (pathway $a = .32, p < .001$) and romantic satisfaction (pathway $c = .20, p < .001$). Accounting for both self-efficacy and RC-S, we found that romantic self-efficacy was still a predictor of relationship quality (pathway $b = .33, p < .001$), but that RC-S was no longer a significant predictor (pathway $c' = .09, p = .070$). The 95% BCCI for the indirect (ab) pathway was .05 to .20 ($M = .11$), revealing that the mediation was significant since zero was excluded (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). To determine whether the direct (c') pathway remained significant, we used PROCESS to compute the 95% BCCI, which produced the values of -.01 to .18 ($M = .09$). Because it includes zero, the direct pathway is no longer significant; that is, once the indirect pathway is accounted for, there is no direct pathway. A comparison of the ab and c pathways (Hayes, 2013) revealed that 52.8% of the effect of RC-S on relationship quality, relative to the total effect (c), was mediated by romantic self-efficacy. Thus, the tendency for people with high levels of RC-S to have higher levels of self-efficacy accounts for the majority of their increased feelings of relationship quality. Figure 9 graphs the results of these analyses.

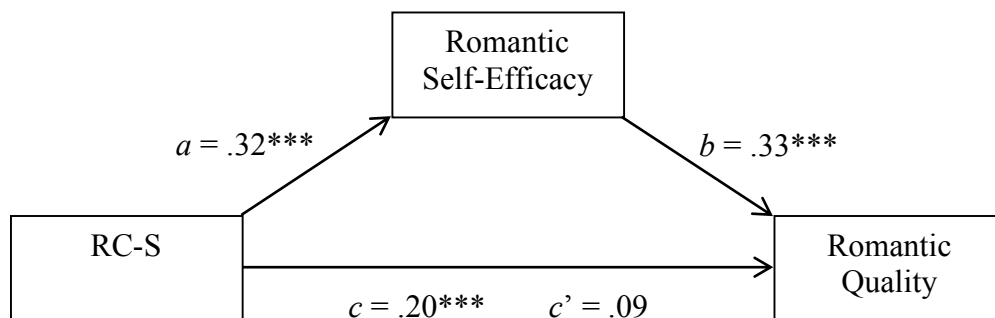


Figure 9. Romantic Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of RC-S and Romantic Quality
 Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

RC-S→*Self-Efficacy*→*Reactivity*. The third model examined whether romantic self-efficacy mediated the relationship between RC-S and reactivity during conflict. RC-S was found to be a significant predictor for both romantic self-efficacy (pathway $a = .32, p < .001$) and reactivity during conflict (pathway $c = -.36, p < .001$). When RC-S and romantic self-efficacy were both treated as predictors, both self-efficacy (pathway $b = -.24, p = .011$) and RC-S (pathway $c' = -.28, p = .003$) continued to predict the outcome. To test for the significance of the mediational pathway, we used PROCESS to compute a 95% BCCI. The calculated 95% BCCI for the indirect (ab) pathway was $-.18$ to $-.02$ ($M = -.08$), indicating that the mediation was significant, as zero was excluded (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). For comparison purposes, we computed the 95% BCCI for the direct (c') pathway, which was $-.46$ to $-.10$ ($M = -.28$). Thus, partial mediation is supported, since zero was excluded. According to a comparison of the ab and c pathways (Hayes, 2013), 21% of the relationship between RC-S and the outcome is due to the mediational pathway. Based on these findings, it appears that romantic self-efficacy accounts for part, but not all, of the reason for why high RC-S individuals tend to express less reactivity during conflict with their partners. Figure 10 graphs the results of these analyses.

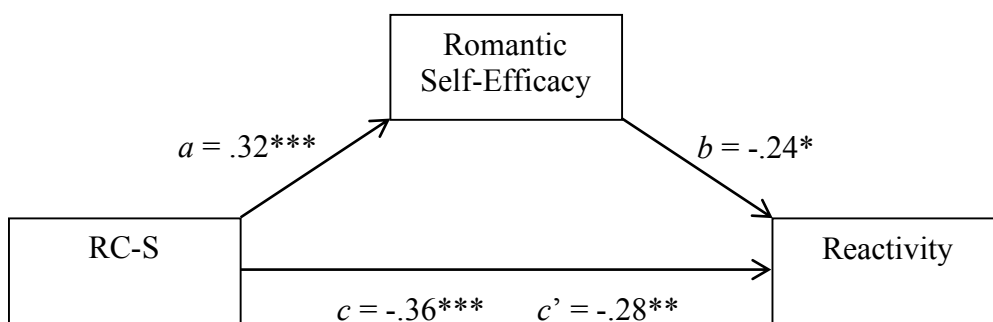


Figure 10. Romantic Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of RC-S and Reactivity
 Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

RC-S→*Self-Efficacy*→*Abuse*. The fourth model examined whether romantic self-efficacy mediated the relationship between RC-S and non-physical abuse towards the partner. We found

that RC-S significantly predicted romantic self-efficacy (pathway $a = .32, p < .001$) and partner abuse (pathway $c = -.24, p = .012$). Next, we set RC-S and self-efficacy as simultaneous predictors for partner abuse, and found that though self-efficacy continued to predict the outcome (pathway $b = -.28, p < .001$), RC-S was no longer a significant predictor (pathway $c' = -.15, p = .118$). To test for the significance of the mediational (ab) pathway, we had PROCESS compute the 95% BCCI, which produced the values of $-.24$ to $-.02$ ($M = -.09$). Because zero was excluded, significant mediation was supported (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). The 95% BCCI for the direct (c') pathway was $-.33$ to $.04$ ($M = -.15$), and thus there was full mediation. A comparison of the indirect and direct pathways (Hayes, 2013) revealed that 37% of the IV/DV relationship was due to the mediational pathway. Therefore, the tendency for people with high levels of RC-S to have higher levels of self-efficacy tends to largely account for their decreased abusive behaviors towards their partners. Figure 11 graphs the results of these analyses.

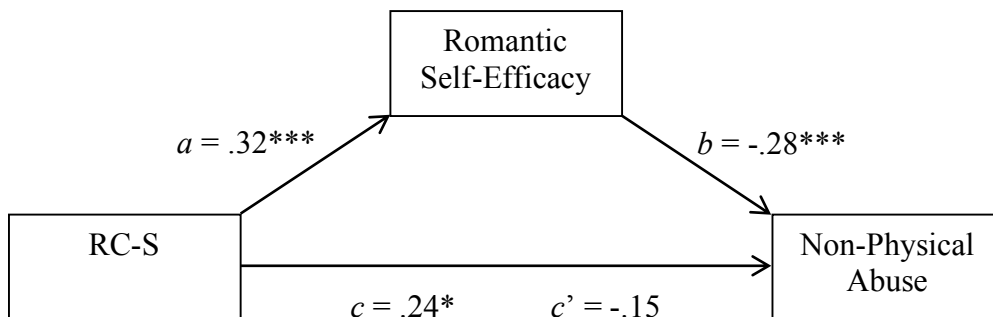


Figure 11. Romantic Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of RC-S and Non-Physical Abuse
 Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Daily Diary Outcomes

Daily diary protocols are ones in which multiple daily reports are obtained for each individual. In such designs, days are “nested” within individuals and data of this type is best handled using multi-level modeling (MLM) procedures (Nezlek, 2008). Accordingly, we

analyzed our daily diary data within an MLM framework, using SAS Proc Mixed (Singer, 1998). The two RC scores were “level 2” predictors and these were *z*-scored prior to analysis. Later, we also conducted a few analyses in which we included “level 1” (i.e., daily) predictors. For these analyses, we person-centered such predictors (Nezlek, 2008).

We first examined whether RC predicts general measures of well-being and behavior. There were quite a few relationships of this type for the RC-S scale, as shown in Table 6. With respect to well-being, RC-S was a positive predictor of positive affect ($t = 3.31, p = .001, b = .26$) and a negative predictor of negative affect ($t = -2.16, p = .033, b = -.14$). Thus, people with higher RC-S levels appear to be generally happier than people with low RC-S levels. These individuals were also less likely to engage in antisocial behaviors towards people in general ($t = -2.54, p = .013, b = -.07$) and they were less impulsive ($t = -2.35, p = .021, b = -.10$). Accordingly, there were sources of evidence in favor of the idea that RC-S benefits daily feelings and behaviors, even outside the context of one’s relationship (see Table 6 for additional findings). There was also robust evidence that RC benefits partner-related behaviors, emotions, and motivations in daily life (see Table 6). This tended to be true for both the RC-E and RC-S scales. For example, high RC individuals tended to have more caring (RC-E: $t = 3.00, p = .003, b = .22$; RC-S: $t = 2.73, p = .008, b = .20$) and less angry feelings towards their partner (RC-E: $t = -.78, p = .435, b = -.03$; RC-S: $t = -2.67, p = .009, b = -.10$). They were also more satisfied with their relationship as a whole (RC-E: $t = 2.86, p = .005, b = .24$; RC-S: $t = 3.25, p = .002, b = .26$), with their partner (RC-E: $t = 2.62, p = .010, b = .19$; RC-S: $t = 3.09, p = .003, b = .22$), and with the time that they spent with their partner (RC-E: $t = 2.04, p = .044, b = .19$; RC-S: $t = 2.19, p = .031, b = .20$). Some of these relationships may have motivational roots, as RC was a positive predictor of prosocial motivations towards one’s partner (RC-E: $t = 2.68, p = .009, b = .16$;

Table 6

Daily Diary (Level 2) Main Effects of RC on Daily Outcomes

Daily Outcome	RC-E	RC-S	RC-E'	RC-S'
<i>Generic</i>				
Motivation				
Power	-.07	.08	-.15	.15
Affiliation	-.04	.12	-.14	.19*
Emotion				
Positive Affect	.10	.26**	-.05	.28**
Negative Affect	-.02	-.14*	.07	-.18*
Appraisal				
Threat	-.20**	-.27***	-.08	-.22**
Reward	.03	.18**	-.08	.22**
Coping				
Active	.12	.11	.09	.07
Denial	-.13	-.17*	-.06	-.13
Behaviors				
Prosocial	-.01	.02	-.03	.04
Antisocial	-.03	-.07*	.01	-.07*
Impulsive	-.03	-.10*	.03	-.12
Events				
Provocative	-.09	-.13**	-.02	-.12*
Positive	.04	.18*	-.07	.21*
Stressful	.05	-.04	.10	-.09
Goal-Related				
Grit	.20*	.25**	.09	.20*
<i>Partner-Related</i>				
Feelings				
Anger	-.03	-.10**	.03	-.11*
Caring	.22**	.20**	.16	.12
Satisfaction				
Partner	.19*	.22**	.10	.16*
Relationship	.24**	.26**	.14	.19*
Time Spent	.19*	.20*	.12	.14

Note: The coefficients reported in the table reflect both the magnitude and the direction of the relevant relationship. RC-E' stands for the predictive effect of RC-E when RC-S is controlled. RC-S' stands for the predictive effect of RC-S when RC-E is controlled. * = < .05, ** = < .01, *** = < .001.

Table 6. *Daily Diary (Level 2) Main Effects of RC on Daily Outcomes (continued)*

Daily Outcome	RC-E	RC-S	RC-E'	RC-S'
Events				
Provocative	-.07*	-.09**	-.04	-.07*
Supportive	.12	.12	.07	.09
State Attachment Style				
Anxious	-.01	-.04	.02	-.05
Avoidant	-.02	-.04	.01	-.05
Closeness	.16	.30*	.01	.29
Frequency of Activities	-.001	.03	-.02	.04*
Motivations				
Prosocial	.16**	.19***	.08	.15*
Antisocial	-.03	-.04	-.01	-.03

Note: The coefficients reported in the table reflect both the magnitude and the direction of the relevant relationship. RC-E' stands for the predictive effect of RC-E when RC-S is controlled. RC-S' stands for the predictive effect of RC-S when RC-E is controlled. * = < .05, ** = < .01, *** = < .001.

RC-S: $t = 3.39, p = .001, b = .19$). These results largely support RC as a skillset relevant to daily romantic functioning, as there is evidence that people with high RC levels exhibit feelings and behaviors that are intended to benefit the romantic partner and the overall relationship.

The RC-S scale tended to be a better zero-order predictor of the daily outcomes, though the RC-E scale did predict some outcomes. To gain further insights into the relative value of the two RC scales, we conducted models in which we entered both scales as simultaneous predictors, as shown in Table 6. In Table 6, *RC-E'* stands for the predictive effect of RC-E when RC-S is controlled, and *RC-S'* represents the predictive effect of RC-S when RC-E is controlled. The RC-S scale continued to predict a number of outcomes, whereas the RC-E variable did not. For example, RC-S continued to predict daily feelings of positive affect ($t = 3.09, p = .003, b = .28$) and negative affect ($t = -2.31, p = .023, b = -.18$), and thus seemed to be more closely related to well-being. In addition, the positive relationship between RC-S and relationship satisfaction remained significant ($t = 2.07, p = .041, b = .19$), and high RC-S individuals reported that they

engaged in a greater variety of activities with their partner ($t = 2.09, p = .040, b = .04$). Perhaps the reason that the RC-S scale remained a more consistent predictor was its behavioral component; that is, relative to the RC-E, the RC-S should be more proximal to behavior and therefore more consequential.

In principle, RC could moderate the impact of daily events or activities. To examine this possibility, we performed cross-level analyses and these models included the level 1 predictors of partner interaction frequency, experiencing supportive events from the partner, or experiencing provoking events from the partner. The outcomes were daily positive and negative affect, daily feelings of anger and care towards the partner, daily relationship satisfaction, and daily prosocial and antisocial behaviors towards the partner. Altogether, we performed 42 of these analyses and only one cross-level interaction was significant, $t = -2.60, p = .010, b = -.06$. Specifically, we found that the inverse relationship between activities with the partner and negative affect was more pronounced at higher levels of RC-S, as shown in Figure 12. However, there were no other significant interactions.

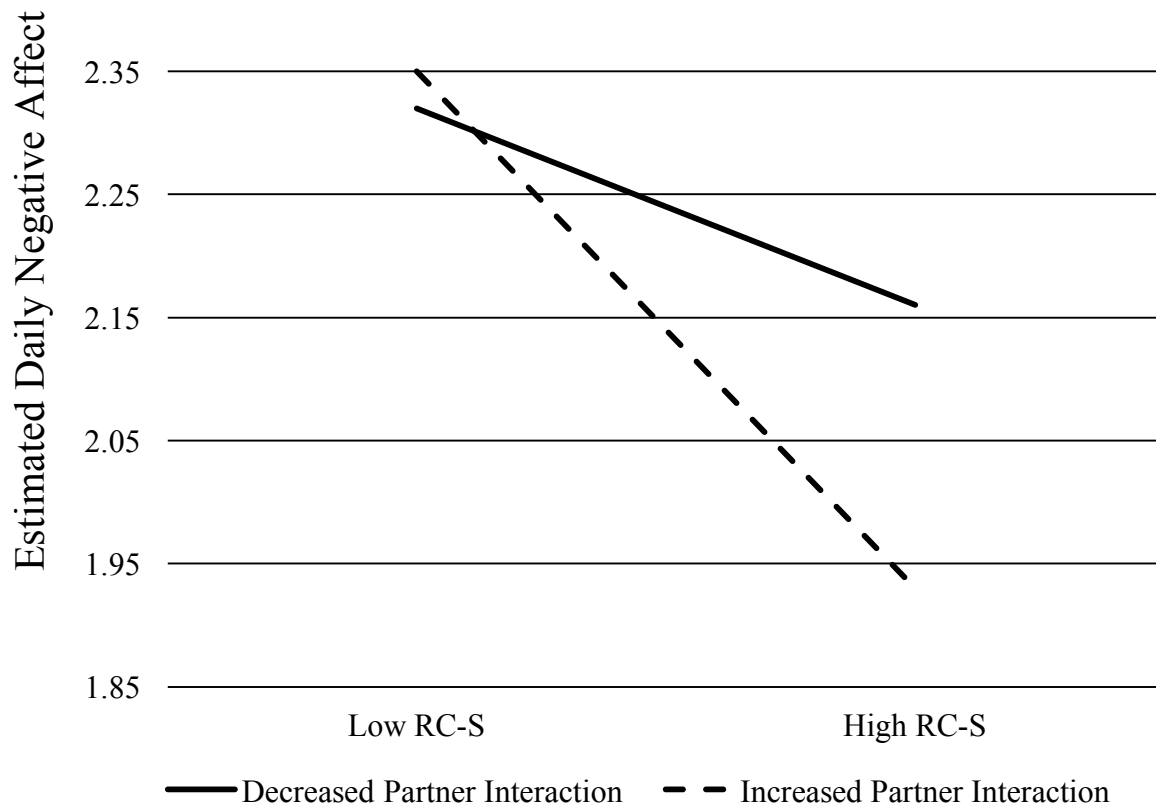


Figure 12. Estimated Means of Daily Negative Affect as a Function of RC-S and Partner Interaction.

DISCUSSION

In pilot work, we had developed a new method for assessing romantic competence (RC). The present research sought to significantly extend our knowledge of this assessment method, these individual differences, and their consequences for relationship functioning. The overall conclusion is that the assessment approach appears to work and the individual differences are consequential, though certainly further work would be desirable. In the discussion, we say more about the test, the findings, and future directions that follow from this work.

Reliability and Validity of the RC Measure

A major objective of the work was to determine whether we could assess RC without explicitly asking people about their RC levels, as asking people about their RC levels could result in mistaken ideas about one's competence or in unwarranted forms of self-enhancement. We borrowed from the situation judgment test (SJT) literature in creating this assessment device because it has shown that it is possible to model a given domain of functioning (like work) by presenting people with situations representing that domain and then quantifying the adequacy of their answers (Whetzel & McDaniel, 2009). By presenting people with common relationship-related situations and measuring people's ideas about how to respond to them, we thought it possible to create a similar measure targeting romantic knowledge and behavioral tendencies. Both the RC-E and RC-S scales had good levels of reliability, indicating that there are pronounced individual differences in RC that are apparent across different types of scenarios. We were also able to use norms from a previous pilot test. The fact that this worked suggests that the relevant sources of knowledge are generalizable across different samples. Among college student samples, at least, the RC measure we devised appears to work well for examining competency in romantic relationships.

The RC test is an ability-based measure opposed to a test that relies on one's perception of their own competence. Hence, correlations between the RC measure and external correlates extend beyond mono-method biases. Accordingly, it is worth highlighting some of the evidence for the validity of the test. Women tend to care about relationships more and they are sometimes thought to be relationship experts, relative to men (Schmitt, 2003). The present findings are interesting in this light because women tended to receive higher RC scores than men. This was particularly true for the RC-E measure, which should tap knowledge, per se, in a relatively straightforward manner (Whetzel & McDaniel, 2009). Pilot results had suggested that agreeable people receive higher RC scores and positive relationships of this type make sense given extant scholarship on agreeableness (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997). In the present study, too, agreeable people obtained higher RC scores, though this was particularly true of the RC-E measure relative to the RC-S measure. A new finding from the present results is that people with higher levels of Machiavellianism and psychopathy obtained lower RC scores, which might be expected given the other correlates of these dark interpersonal styles (Jones & Paulhus, 2011).

Outcome-Based Implications

One of the central goals of the current study was to compare the RC-E and the RC-S. The RC-E test may better tap a person's knowledge, independent of their actual behavior (Whetzel & McDaniel, 2009), but the RC-S could be more consequential precisely *because* it captures a combination knowledge and behavioral enactment. In general, RC-S was the better predictor of most of the key relationship outcomes. For example, it was the better predictor of daily feelings of caring and satisfaction concerning one's partner. The RC-E measure, though, appeared to have some particular value in the context of peer judgments. This may be true because peers have somewhat impressionistic views of target competence (Funder, 1995) and these views could also

be partly based on shared discussions with the target, which would primarily tap knowledge rather than overt behavior. Further research focused on these speculations would be of value, though. In the meantime, it appears that the RC-S measure has the wider scope of prediction, at least with respect to daily relationship behaviors and variables such as relationship satisfaction.

To further explain the relationship between RC-S and the key romantic outcomes, we sought to examine the possible role of self-efficacy. Previous research has suggested that individuals who feel more self-efficacious in their relationships have better romantic outcomes (Weiser & Weigel, 2016). Our study extends this literature by showing how self-efficacy can mediate the effects of other variables, such as RC-S. In our study, high RC-S individuals were more likely to engage in effective romantic behaviors because they felt confident that they could carry out those behaviors, which led to more satisfaction and less reactivity in the relationship. The result makes some intuitive sense, though the relationship between RC-S and relationship self-efficacy is likely to be bidirectional. Specifically, greater knowledge about how to respond to relationship events (RC-S) is likely to create positive feedback, which should boost relationship self-efficacy. Ultimately, then, knowledge and confidence are likely to reinforce each other in promoting better relationship outcomes.

Our study has also provided some key insights into how attachment orientations function. We know that people with insecure attachment styles have less satisfactory relationships (Simpson, 1990). However, there could be many mechanisms responsible for such effects. In the present study, we isolated one mechanism—knowledge about relationships—that appears to mediate the effects of both anxious and avoidant attachment styles. Specifically, people with these insecure attachment styles had lower RC levels and these lower RC levels accounted for at least a portion of the variance in their negative outcomes (e.g., decreased satisfaction). Thus, we

might be able to mitigate some of the problematic consequences of insecure attachment style through knowledge-based interventions. In general, this idea is consistent with the principle of “psychoeducation”. However, our findings also isolate a target of such intervention efforts – namely, relationship scenarios and how one should respond to them.

It was useful to include peer-reported outcomes because they allowed us to show that RC is not just a predictor of self-reported outcomes; it also predicts something that is available to observers. For example, the RC-E measure predicted how successful peers thought a person’s relationships were and also predicted perceptions of conflict. On the other hand, RC/outcome relationships were not apparent for all peer outcomes and there were some cases in which peer-peer agreement was lower than we would have desired. In future iterations, one could compensate for lower reliabilities by increasing the number of peers or items per measure. In addition, it would be useful to expand the scope of outcomes considered. For example, we know that high RC people are perceived as more agreeable, but we do not know whether they evince a less secure attachment style or whether they are seen to be more Machiavellian.

To some surprise, RC was not a significant predictor of how partners viewed their romantic relationship. For example, partner ratings of romantic satisfaction and closeness in the relationship were statistically independent of RC, though some of these relationships were in the right direction. In retrospect, we think that partner judgments are “noisy” in the sense that partner judgments may be impacted by many factors aside from RC. For example, partner satisfaction with the relationship is likely to primarily reflect his or her attachment style, relationship history, personality, and the like, but we did not measure any of these factors. Had we done so, we may have been able to cut through some of the noise of partner judgments.

Some further elaboration may be useful. The correlation between participant satisfaction with the relationship and partner satisfaction was $r = .25, p = .014$. Although significant, this correlation is fairly modest and suggests that participants and partners are basing their impressions of the relationship on different sources of information. Because this is true, it is entirely possible that high RC participants are acting in more prosocial and less antisocial ways (as the daily data suggest), but partners are not greatly affected by these behaviors, at least within the normal range of behavior. Partners could, instead, be influenced by more superficial features such as attractiveness or economic status, neither of which is likely to covary with RC. Thus, the relationship between RC and partner judgments is likely to be noisy. A much larger sample size could help overcome some of this noisiness.

The purpose of the daily diary portion of the investigation was to examine whether RC levels manifest themselves in day-to-day behaviors and feelings concerning the relationship. The results suggest a resounding yes to this question. For example, high levels of RC were predictive of caring feelings towards the partner, overall feelings of satisfaction in the relationship, and prosocial behaviors towards the partner, to name a few of the relationships observed. Moreover, high RC individuals were less likely to engage in daily behaviors or have daily motivations that had antisocial or malevolent intentions. Therefore, high RC individuals appear to act in ways that are consistent with possessing higher levels of RC (Burlison, 1995) and the daily diary data offer some of the strongest evidence for this point to date.

Additionally, the daily findings encourage the idea that the benefits of RC may extend beyond relationship outcomes, narrowly considered. Specifically, people with higher RC levels had greater daily well-being (increased daily positive affect and decreased daily negative affect). Some of these affective benefits could follow from relationship events, but some of them could

follow from broader, more agreeable affiliative patterns. In fact, further analyses showed that daily negative affect was decreased for high RC individuals the most when they interacted with their partner more frequently. People with higher RC levels may therefore get more out of their social lives, likely because of their greater know-how in social domains.

Emergent Insights Concerning RC

People with high RC levels were more satisfied with their relationships. Why is this so? In the daily portion of the study, we found that high RC people cared more about their relationship partners on a day-to-day basis. This greater caring is likely to support perspective taking and mutual activities that reinforce feelings of closeness and satisfaction (Davis & Oathout, 1987). Further, we found that high RC people were more satisfied with the time that they spent with their partners and there was some indication that they may spend more time with their partners as well. Such daily interactions are likely to be rewarding, which could boost relationship satisfaction in the long-term. Accordingly, it may be useful to incorporate some of these motivational and instrumental perspectives when thinking about how RC works.

Alternatively, it is useful to emphasize some of the traits that low RC people possessed. We found inverse relationships between RC and the dark triad traits, such that low RC people were more Machiavellian and more psychopathic in their interpersonal patterns. These traits are marked by manipulation and selfishness, which would cause problems in relationships (Koladich & Atkinson, 2016). Also, some low RC people displayed insecure attachment styles, which create their own problems in relationships (Simpson, 1990). Finally, there were indications that low RC people were more impulsive and reactive in their romantic relationships, which could escalate tensions when they are present (Jonason, Luevano, & Adams, 2012). In sum, a focus on

people with low levels of RC can be highly informative in evaluating the findings and charting future directions.

Future Directions

Although the RC measures tap an implicit form of “know-how”, this know-how could potentially be taught, thus benefitting relational functioning. In specific terms, we envision the possibility that the RC-E and RC-S measures could be given, at least informally, as a way of probing for how clients construe their relationships and encounter relationship problems. There are different therapeutic strategies and approaches when dealing with problems within romantic relationships, but sometimes it is difficult to determine what will be helpful in a given case. Based on our findings from the study, the RC measure may provide insight for a clinician, to the extent that they get an objective indication of the strengths and weaknesses of client decision-making. It is also possible that the test could be used as a basis for teaching effective relationship behaviors in that one can compare client responses to norms while delivering feedback.

To advance our understanding of RC in relationships, it would be useful to conduct some quasi-longitudinal or longitudinal studies. As an example, it would be informative to explore whether RC matters to a greater extent within particular stages of a relationship. Based on our thoughts, RC could become more important as romantic relationships develop, precisely because habits become more ingrained over time and the wisdom of those habits is quite likely to follow from RC levels. Along related lines, we would like to investigate whether RC affects the longevity of romantic relationships. Initially, this could be examined within the context of short-term longitudinal studies (e.g., 3 months) to see whether RC positively predicts relationship status (intact or not). Presumably, couples that have high RC partners will not break up, thus further documenting the importance of RC in relationships.

Lastly, it is of great interest to assess RC among clinical populations, specifically related to Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). BPD is notoriously known for relationship instability and reactivity, creating more hostile and less supportive romantic bonds between the afflicted individual and his or her partner. A study of this type would allow us to explore whether high BPD individuals have deficient knowledge concerning romantic relationships (RC-E) or if they are just more likely to engage in maladaptive behaviors, regardless of their levels of romantic knowledge (RC-S). We hypothesize that individuals high in BPD traits most fundamentally lack romantic knowledge (low RC-E), which should in turn explain some of their counterproductive relationship behaviors. Exploring the role of RC among clinical populations would allow us to better understand the intricacies of relationship dysfunction in a way that is more convincing than possible using non-clinical samples.

Conclusion

Competence within romantic relationships should matter quite a bit, but the literature has lacked precise and reliable ways of assessing it. By capitalizing on the SJT (Motowidlo et al., 1990) and emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 2003) literatures, we think we have devised a promising method for examining it through social reasoning processes. The investigation added to our knowledge of RC and it supported the idea that RC matters within relationships. In addition, the multi-method nature of findings, in combination with the new mediation-related results, provide concrete directions for future research.

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APPENDIX A. PARTICIPANT MEASURES

Romantic Competence Scale – Effectiveness (RC-E)

Instructions: We will describe a situation involving a named character (the protagonist) who is in a heterosexual romantic relationship. The situation will be about the romantic relationship and we will use the word "partner" to describe the other person. You should read the situation, think about how the protagonist should deal with the situation, read the way of responding to it, and make a rating according to the question asked. The situations will be repeated, but a different question will be asked each time.

Scenario 1:

Jason does not like his partner's best friend. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Jason could deal with the situation.

<i>effective</i>	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely</i>	
<i>i.</i> FIND HIS PARTNER A NEW BEST FRIEND	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> TRY TO FIND REDEEMING QUALITIES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> SUCK IT UP AND PLAY NICE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> ASK THE PARTNER TO MAKE A CHOICE - HIM OR THE BEST FRIEND	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 2:

Henry has a partner who gets angry too often. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Henry could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> SUGGEST ANGER MANAGEMENT CLASSES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> GET ANGRY IN RETURN	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> BE CAREFUL NOT TO ANGER HIS PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> IGNORE HER WHEN SHE GETS ANGRY	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 3:

Jerry finds out that his partner has a Tinder account and has been using it to meet other guys. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Jerry could deal with the situation.

Not effective at all *Extremely effective*

<i>i.</i> STEAL HER PHONE AND DELETE THE TINDER ACCOUNT	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> PRETEND TO BE ONE OF THOSE GUYS TO CATCH HER IN THE ACT	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> TRY TO BE MORE SATISFYING AS A PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> GET A TINDER ACCOUNT TOO	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 4:

Charles does not want to use condoms anymore. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Charles could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> STOP USING CONDOMS DURING SEX	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> ARRANGE A MEETING AT THE BIRTH CONTROL CLINIC	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> "FORGET" TO BUY THEM ON PURPOSE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> TALK TO HIS PARTNER ABOUT ALTERNATIVE BIRTH CONTROL OPTIONS	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 5:

Steven looks on his partner's phone and finds text messages and pictures from other men. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Steven could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> TEXT THEM TELLING THEM TO STOP MESSGING HER	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> GET ADVICE FROM HIS FRIENDS ON WHAT TO DO	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> CONFRONT HIS PARTNER ABOUT THE TEXTS AND PICTURES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> FLIRT WITH OTHER WOMEN IN RETURN	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 6:

Roger is suspicious that his partner has cheated, but has no proof. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Roger could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> SECRETLY FOLLOW HER AROUND	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> START SNOOPING AROUND FOR EVIDENCE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> GET HIS BEST FRIEND TO FIND OUT	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> CONFRONT THE PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 7:

Donna senses there is something wrong in her relationship. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Donna could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> SERIOUSLY CONSIDER BREAKING UP	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> TRY TO FIX THE RELATIONSHIP SO THIS FEELING GOES AWAY	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> IGNORE THESE FEELINGS	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> TALK TO HER PARTNER TO SEE IF SOMETHING IS WRONG	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 8:

William's partner has not called or texted in two weeks. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that William could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> TALK TO HIS PARTNER'S BEST FRIEND	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> FOLLOW HER AND SEE WHAT SHE IS DOING	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> CALL THE POLICE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> CALL HIS PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 9:

Michelle wants to have sex more frequently with her partner. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Michelle could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> BUY MORE ALCOHOL FOR HIM	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> BUY MORE SEXY CLOTHING	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> LEARN NEW STRATEGIES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> AMBUSH HIM MORE OFTEN	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 10:

Michelle wants to have sex more frequently with her partner. ***Rate the effectiveness of the following ways that Michelle could deal with the situation.

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> GO OUT WHILE HER PARTNER STAYS IN TO WATCH NETFLIX	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> GIVE IN AND WATCH NETFLIX	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> ALTERNATE THESE ACTIVITIES AS A COMPROMISE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> UNSUBSCRIBE TO NETFLIX	1	2	3	4	5

Romantic Competence Scale – Self (RC-S)

Instructions: We will now present the scenarios again, but this time, you will make a very different rating. Specifically, imagine that you are in the situation being described and rate how likely it is that YOU would respond in each of the indicated ways, if YOU were in the situation.

Scenario 1:

You do not like your partner's best friend. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> FIND YOUR PARTNER A NEW BEST FRIEND	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> TRY TO FIND REDEEMING QUALITIES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> SUCK IT UP AND PLAY NICE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> ASK YOUR PARTNER TO MAKE A CHOICE - HIM OR THE BEST FRIEND	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 2:

You have a partner who gets angry too often. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> SUGGEST ANGER MANAGEMENT CLASSES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> GET ANGRY IN RETURN	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> BE CAREFUL NOT TO ANGER YOUR PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> IGNORE YOUR PARTNER WHEN THEY GET ANGRY	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 3:

You find out that your partner has a Tinder account and has been using it to meet other people. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> STEAL YOUR PARTNER'S PHONE AND DELETE THE TINDER ACCOUNT	1	2	3	4	5

<i>ii.</i> PRETEND TO BE A PERSON ON THE APP TO CATCH YOUR PARTNER IN THE ACT	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> TRY TO BE MORE SATISFYING AS A PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> GET A TINDER ACCOUNT TOO	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 4:

You do not want to use condoms anymore. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> STOP USING CONDOMS DURING SEX	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> ARRANGE A MEETING AT THE BIRTH CONTROL CLINIC	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> "FORGET" TO BUY THEM ON PURPOSE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> TALK TO YOUR PARTNER ABOUT ALTERNATIVE BIRTH CONTROL OPTIONS	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 5:

You look on your partner's phone and find text messages and pictures from other people. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> TEXT THEM TELLING THEM TO STOP MESSGING YOUR PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> GET ADVICE FROM YOUR FRIENDS ON WHAT TO DO	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> CONFRONT YOUR PARTNER ABOUT THE TEXTS AND PICTURES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> FLIRT WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN RETURN	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 6:

You are suspicious that your partner has cheated, but have no proof. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> SECRETLY FOLLOW YOUR PARTNER AROUND	1	2	3	4	5

<i>ii.</i> START SNOOPING AROUND FOR EVIDENCE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> GET YOUR BEST FRIEND TO FIND OUT	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> CONFRONT THE PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 7:

You sense there is something wrong in your relationship. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> SERIOUSLY CONSIDER BREAKING UP	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> TRY TO FIX THE RELATIONSHIP SO THIS FEELING GOES AWAY	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> IGNORE THESE FEELINGS	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> TALK TO YOUR PARTNER TO SEE IF SOMETHING IS WRONG	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 8:

Your partner has not called or texted in two weeks. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> TALK TO YOUR PARTNER'S BEST FRIEND	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> FOLLOW YOUR PARTNER AND SEE WHAT THEY ARE DOING	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> CALL THE POLICE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> CALL YOUR PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 9:

You want to have sex more frequently with your partner. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>		<i>Extremely effective</i>		
<i>i.</i> BUY MORE ALCOHOL FOR YOUR PARTNER	1	2	3	4	5

<i>ii.</i> BUY MORE SEXY CLOTHING	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> LEARN NEW STRATEGIES	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> AMBUSH YOUR PARTNER MORE OFTEN	1	2	3	4	5

Scenario 10:

You want to go out on a Saturday night, but your partner enjoys staying in and watching Netflix. *** If you were in this situation, how likely would it be that YOU would do the following?

	<i>Not effective at all</i>			<i>Extremely effective</i>	
<i>i.</i> GO OUT WHILE YOUR PARTNER STAYS IN TO WATCH NETFLIX	1	2	3	4	5
<i>ii.</i> GIVE IN AND WATCH NETFLIX	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iii.</i> ALTERNATE THESE ACTIVITIES AS A COMPROMISE	1	2	3	4	5
<i>iv.</i> UNSUBSCRIBE TO NETFLIX	1	2	3	4	5

Big 5 IPIP Inventory

Instructions: You will see a series of statements that may describe you well, or not at all. Indicate how well each statement describes you by choosing numbers from the scale provided:

- 1 = Very inaccurate
- 2 = Moderately inaccurate
- 3 = Moderately accurate
- 4 = Very accurate

- 1) I am the life of the party.
- 2) I feel comfortable around people.
- 3) I start conversations.
- 4) I talk to a lot of different people at parties.
- 5) I don't mind being the center of attention.
- 6) I don't talk a lot.
- 7) I keep in the background.
- 8) I have little to say.
- 9) I don't like to draw attention to myself.
- 10) I am quiet around strangers.
- 11) I get stressed out easily.
- 12) I worry about things.
- 13) I am easily disturbed.
- 14) I get upset easily.
- 15) I change my mood a lot.
- 16) I have frequent mood swings.
- 17) I get irritated easily.
- 18) I often feel blue.
- 19) I am relaxed most of the time.
- 20) I seldom feel blue.
- 21) I have a rich vocabulary.
- 22) I have a vivid imagination.
- 23) I have excellent ideas.
- 24) I am quick to understand things.
- 25) I use difficult words.
- 26) I spend time reflecting on things.
- 27) I am full of ideas.
- 28) I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.
- 29) I am not interested in abstract ideas.
- 30) I do not have a good imagination.
- 31) I am interested in people.
- 32) I sympathize with others' feelings.
- 33) I have a soft heart.
- 34) I take time out for others.
- 35) I feel others' emotions.
- 36) I make people feel at ease.

- 37) I am not really interested in others.
- 38) I insult people.
- 39) I am not interested in people's problems.
- 40) I feel little concern for others.
- 41) I am always prepared.
- 42) I pay attention to the details.
- 43) I get chores done right away.
- 44) I like order.
- 45) I follow a schedule.
- 46) I am exacting in my work.
- 47) I leave my belongings around.
- 48) I make a mess of things.
- 49) I often forget to put things back in proper place.
- 50) I shirk my duties.

Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR)

Instructions: The following statements concern how you feel in romantic relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it, using the scale provided.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Neutral/Mixed, 7 = Strongly Agree

- 1) I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.
- 2) I worry about being abandoned.
- 3) I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.
- 4) I worry a lot about my relationships.
- 5) Just when my partner starts to get close to me I find myself pulling away.
- 6) I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.
- 7) I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.
- 8) I worry a fair amount about losing my partner.
- 9) I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.
- 10) I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him/her.
- 11) I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
- 12) I often want to merge completely with romantic partners, and this sometimes scares them away.
- 13) I am nervous when partners get too close to me.
- 14) I worry about being alone.
- 15) I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.
- 16) My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.
- 17) I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
- 18) I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partner.
- 19) I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner.
- 20) Sometimes I feel that I force my partners to show more feeling, more commitment.
- 21) I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.
- 22) I do not often worry about being abandoned.
- 23) I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.
- 24) If I can't get my partner to show interest in me, I get upset or angry.
- 25) I tell my partner just about everything.
- 26) I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.
- 27) I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.
- 28) When I'm not involved in a relationship, I feel somewhat anxious and insecure.
- 29) I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners.
- 30) I get frustrated when my partner is not around as much as I would like.
- 31) I don't mind asking romantic partners for comfort, advice, or help.
- 32) I get frustrated if romantic partners are not available when I need them.
- 33) It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.
- 34) When romantic partners disapprove of me, I feel really bad about myself.
- 35) I turn to my partner for many things, including comfort and reassurance.
- 36) I resent it when my partner spends time away from me.

Perceived Relationship Quality Components (PRQC)

Instructions: Please answer the following questions about your current romantic relationship using the following scale.

1 = Not at all, 7 = Extremely

- 1) How satisfied are you with your relationship?
- 2) How content are you with your relationship?
- 3) How happy are you with your relationship?
- 4) How committed are you to your relationship?
- 5) How dedicated are you to your relationship?
- 6) How devoted are you to your relationship?
- 7) How intimate is your relationship?
- 8) How close is your relationship?
- 9) How connected are you to your partner?
- 10) How much do you trust your partner?
- 11) How much can you count on your partner?
- 12) How dependable is your partner?
- 13) How passionate is your relationship?
- 14) How lustful is your relationship?
- 15) How sexually intense is your relationship?
- 16) How much do you love your partner?
- 17) How much do you adore your partner?
- 18) How much do you cherish your partner?

Partner Abuse Scale – Non-Physical (PASNP)

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to measure the nonphysical abuse your partner has experienced in your relationship with you. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and as accurately as you can by placing a number beside each one as follows:

- 1 = None of the time
- 2 = Very rarely
- 3 = A little of the time
- 4 = Some of the time
- 5 = A good part of the time
- 6 = Most of the time
- 7 = All of the time

- 1) I belittle my partner.
- 2) I demand obedience to my partner's whims.
- 3) I become surly and angry if my partner says that I am drinking too much.
- 4) I demand that my partner performs sex acts that he or she does not enjoy or like.
- 5) I become very upset if my partner's work is not done when I think it should be.
- 6) I do not want my partner to have any male friends.
- 7) I tell my partner that they are ugly and unattractive.
- 8) I tell my partner that they couldn't manage or take care of themselves without me.
- 9) I act like my partner is my personal servant.
- 10) I insult or shame my partner in front of others.
- 11) I become very angry if my partner disagrees with my point of view.
- 12) I am stingy in giving my partner money.
- 13) I belittle my partner intellectually.
- 14) I demand that my partner stays home.
- 15) I feel that my partner should not work or go to school.
- 16) I do not want my partner to socialize with my female friends.
- 17) I demand sex whether my partner wants it or not.
- 18) I scream and yell at my partner.
- 19) I shout and scream at my partner when I drink.
- 20) I order my partner around.
- 21) I have no respect for my partner's feelings.
- 22) I act like a bully towards my partner.
- 23) I frighten my partner.
- 24) I treat my partner like a dunce.
- 25) I am surly and rude to my partner.

Romantic Partner Conflict Scale (RPCS)

Instructions: Think about how you handle conflict with your romantic partner. Specifically, think about a significant conflict issue that you and your partner have disagreed about recently. Using the options provided, please indicate which response is most like how you handled conflict. If you do not have a romantic partner, respond with your most current partner in mind. If you have never been in a romantic relationship, answer in terms of what you think your responses would most likely be.

- 1 = Strongly disagree with statement
- 2 = Moderately disagree with statement
- 3 = Neutral, neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Moderately agree with statement
- 5 = Strongly agree with statement

- 1) My partner and I try to avoid arguments.
- 2) I avoid disagreements with my partner.
- 3) I avoid conflict with my partner.
- 4) When my partner and I disagree, we argue loudly.
- 5) Our conflicts usually last quite a while.
- 6) My partner and I have frequent conflicts.
- 7) I suffer a lot from my partner.
- 8) I become verbally abusive to my partner when we have conflict.
- 9) My partner and I often argue because I do not trust him/her.
- 10) When we argue or fight, I try to win.
- 11) I try to take control when we argue.
- 12) I rarely let my partner win an argument.
- 13) When we disagree, my goal is to convince my partner that I am right.
- 14) When we argue, I let my partner know I am in charge.
- 15) When we have conflict, I try to push my partner into choosing the solution that I think is best.

Scale of Perceived Social Support (SPSS)

Instructions: The following are statements about your partner. Indicate with the appropriate number the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Uncertain or Unsure
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Giving:

- 1) My partner feels very close to me.
- 2) If my partner needed to borrow 50 dollars, they can count on a loan from me.
- 3) I am overly critical of my partner.
- 4) I give my partner guidance and support when they need it.
- 5) My partner sometimes feels that I don't really like them.
- 6) I give my partner practical kinds of help.
- 7) I recognize the importance of things my partner does for me.
- 8) When my partner has personal problems, they can count on me for help.
- 9) My partner can tell their intimate feelings to me.
- 10) If my partner was short of cash, I could help them out.
- 11) My partner often feels better about themselves after talking to me.
- 12) I advise my partner when they have to make a difficult decision
- 13) I understand my partner.
- 14) If my partner's car broke down, they could not count on me to come to their aid.
- 15) I show my appreciation to my partner.
- 16) I give my partner good advice when they have personal problems.
- 17) I show my partner that I care about them.
- 18) My partner can count on me for practical help in an emergency.
- 19) My partner often gets compliments from me.
- 20) I am not helpful when my partner has a personal problem.
- 21) My partner feels that I love them.
- 22) I offer my partner my assistance, even without being asked.
- 23) My partner feels that I often put down their efforts.
- 24) My partner can come to me when they need advice.
- 25) My partner talks to me about things that are really important to them.
- 26) My partner can stay with me if they ran into difficulty.
- 27) I praise my partner when they do well.
- 28) I help my partner cope with life's everyday problems.

Receiving:

- 29) I feel very close to my partner.
- 30) If I needed to borrow 50 dollars, I can count on a loan from my partner.
- 31) My partner is overly critical of me.
- 32) My partner gives me guidance and support when I need it.

- 33) I sometimes feels that my partner doesn't really like me.
- 34) My partner gives me practical kinds of help.
- 35) My partner recognizes the importance of things I do for them.
- 36) When I have personal problems, I can count on them for help.
- 37) I can tell my intimate feelings to my partner.
- 38) If I was short of cash, my partner could help me out.
- 39) I often feel better about myself after talking to my partner.
- 40) My partner advises me when I have to make a difficult decision
- 41) My partner understands me.
- 42) If my car broke down, I could not count on my partner to come to my aid.
- 43) My partner shows their appreciation to me.
- 44) My partner gives me good advice when I have personal problems.
- 45) My partner shows me that they care about me.
- 46) I can count on my partner for practical help in an emergency.
- 47) I often get compliments from my partner.
- 48) My partner is not helpful when I have a personal problem.
- 49) I feel that my partner loves me.
- 50) My partner offers their assistance, even without being asked.
- 51) I feel that my partner often puts down my efforts.
- 52) I can count on my partner to come to me when I need advice.
- 53) I talk to my partner about things that are really important to me.
- 54) I can stay with my partner if I ran into difficulty.
- 55) My partner praises me when I do well.
- 56) My partner helps me cope with life's everyday problems.

Self-Efficacy in Romantic Relationships Scale (SERR)

Instructions: Please read each of the following questions and indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement.

1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Neither agree nor disagree, 9 = Strongly agree

- 1) I am just one of those people who is not good at being a romantic relationship partner.
- 2) Failure in my romantic relationships only makes me want to try harder.
- 3) When I make plans in my romantic relationships, I am certain I can make them work.
- 4) I have difficulty focusing on important issues in my romantic relationships.
- 5) If I can't do something successfully in a romantic relationship the first time, I keep trying until I can.
- 6) I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that may come up in romantic relationships.
- 7) Sometimes I avoid getting involved romantically because it seems like too much work.
- 8) Romantic relationships are very difficult for me to deal with.
- 9) I find it difficult to put effort into maintaining a successful romantic relationship.
- 10) I feel insecure about my ability to be a good romantic partner.
- 11) One of my problems is that I cannot come up with the energy to make my romantic relationships more successful.
- 12) Having a successful romantic relationship is very difficult for me.

Implicit Theories of Romantic Relationships Scale (ITRRS)

Instructions. Please read each of the following statements and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree

- 1) Potential relationship partners are either compatible or they are not.
- 2) The ideal relationship develops gradually over time.
- 3) A successful relationship is mostly a matter of finding a compatible partner right from the start.
- 4) A successful relationship evolves through hard work and resolution of incompatibilities.
- 5) Potential relationship partners are either destined to get along or they are not.
- 6) A successful relationship is mostly a matter of learning to resolve conflicts with a partner.
- 7) Relationships that do not start off well inevitably fail.
- 8) Challenges and obstacles in a relationship can make love even stronger.
- 9) If a potential relationship is not meant to be, it will become apparent very soon.
- 10) Problems in a relationship can bring partners closer together.
- 11) The success of a potential relationship is destined from the very beginning.
- 12) Relationships often fail because people do not try hard enough.
- 13) To last, a relationship must seem right from the start.
- 14) With enough effort, almost any relationship can work.
- 15) A relationship that does not get off to a perfect start will never work.
- 16) It takes a lot of time and effort to cultivate a good relationship.
- 17) Struggles at the beginning of a relationship are a sure sign that the relationship will fail.
- 18) Without conflict from time to time, relationships cannot improve.
- 19) Unsuccessful relationships were never meant to be.
- 20) Arguments often enable a relationship to improve.
- 21) Early troubles in a relationship signify a poor match between partners.
- 22) Successful relationships require regular maintenance.

Short Dark Triad (SDT)

Instructions. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following items.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

- 1) It's not wise to tell your secrets.
- 2) Generally speaking, people won't work hard unless they have to.
- 3) Whatever it takes, you must get the important people on your side.
- 4) Avoid direct conflict with others because they may be useful in the future.
- 5) It's wise to keep track of information that you can use against people later.
- 6) You should wait for the right time to get back at people.
- 7) There are things you should hide from other people because they don't need to know.
- 8) Make sure your plans benefit you, not others.
- 9) Most people can be manipulated.
- 10) People see me as a natural leader.
- 11) I hate being the center of attention.
- 12) Many group activities tend to be dull without me.
- 13) I know that I am special because everyone keeps telling me so.
- 14) I like to get acquainted with important people.
- 15) I feel embarrassed if someone compliments me.
- 16) I have been compared to famous people.
- 17) I am an average person.
- 18) I insist on getting the respect I deserve.
- 19) I like to get revenge on authorities.
- 20) I avoid dangerous situations.
- 21) Payback needs to be quick and nasty.
- 22) People often say I'm out of control.
- 23) It's true that I can be mean to others.
- 24) People who mess with me always regret it.
- 25) I have never gotten into trouble with the law.
- 26) I like to pick on losers.
- 27) I'll say anything to get what I want.

COPE Inventory

Instructions. There are lots of ways to try to deal with stress. This questionnaire asks you to indicate what you generally do and feel, when you experience stressful events. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, so choose the most accurate answer for YOU – not what you think "most people" would say or do. Indicate what YOU usually do when YOU experience a stressful event.

- 1 = I usually don't do this at all
- 2 = I usually do this a little bit
- 3 = I usually do this a medium amount
- 4 = I usually do this a lot

- 1) I concentrate my efforts on doing something about it.
- 2) I take additional action to try to get rid of the problem.
- 3) I take direct action to get around the problem.
- 4) I do what has to be done, one step at a time.
- 5) I say to myself "this isn't real".
- 6) I refuse to believe that it has happened.
- 7) I pretend that it hasn't really happened.
- 8) I act as though it hasn't even happened.
- 9) I admit to myself that I can't deal with it, and quit trying.
- 10) I just give up trying to reach my goal.
- 11) I give up the attempt to get what I want.
- 12) I reduce the amount of effort I'm putting into solving the problem.
- 13) I make a plan of action.
- 14) I try to come up with a strategy about what to do.
- 15) I think about how I might best handle the problem.
- 16) I think hard about what steps to take.

APPENDIX B. PARTNER MEASURES

Unidimensional Relationship Closeness Scale (URCS)

Instructions: The following questions refer to your relationship with your romantic partner. Please think about your relationship with your romantic partner when responding to the following questions.

1 = Strongly disagree, 7 = Strongly agree

- 1) My relationship with my partner is close.
- 2) When we are apart, I miss my partner a great deal.
- 3) My partner and I disclose important personal things to each other.
- 4) My partner and I have a strong connection.
- 5) My partner and I want to spend time together.
- 6) I'm sure of my relationship with my partner.
- 7) My partner is a priority in my life.
- 8) My partner and I do a lot of things together.
- 9) When I have free time I choose to spend it alone with my partner.
- 10) I think about my partner a lot.
- 11) My relationship with my partner is important in my life.
- 12) I consider my partner when making important decisions.

Partner Abuse Scale – Non-Physical (PASNP), Partner Version

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to measure the nonphysical abuse you have experienced in your relationship with your partner. It is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and as accurately as you can by placing a number beside each one as follows:

- 1 = None of the time
- 2 = Very rarely
- 3 = A little of the time
- 4 = Some of the time
- 5 = A good part of the time
- 6 = Most of the time
- 7 = All of the time.

- 1) My partner belittles me.
- 2) My partner demands obedience to his or her whims.
- 3) My partner becomes surly and angry if I say he or she is drinking too much.
- 4) My partner demands that I perform sex acts that I do not enjoy or like.
- 5) My partner becomes very upset if my work is not done when he or she thinks it should be.
- 6) My partner does not want me to have any male friends.
- 7) My partner tells me I am ugly and unattractive.
- 8) My partner tells me I couldn't manage or take care of myself without him or her.
- 9) My partner acts like I am his or her personal servant.
- 10) My partner insults or shames me in front of others.
- 11) My partner becomes very angry if I disagree with his or her point of view.
- 12) My partner is stingy in giving me money.
- 13) My partner belittles me intellectually.
- 14) My partner demands that I stay home.
- 15) My partner feels that I should not work or go to school.
- 16) My partner does not want me to socialize with my female friends.
- 17) My partner demands sex whether I want it or not.
- 18) My partner screams and yells at me.
- 19) My partner shouts and screams at me when he or she drinks.
- 20) My partner orders me around.
- 21) My partner has no respect for my feelings.
- 22) My partner acts like a bully towards me.
- 23) My partner frightens me.
- 24) My partner treats me like a dunce.
- 25) My partner is surly and rude to me.

APPENDIX C. PEER MEASURES

Adapted Dating History Questionnaire

Instructions: Think about your friend's romantic relationship history. Answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

- 1 = 1
- 2 = 2
- 3 = 3
- 4 = 4
- 5 = 5
- 6 = 6 or more

- 1) How many romantic relationships do you think your friend has had in his/her lifetime so far?
- 2) How many successful romantic relationships do you think your friend has had in his/her lifetime?
- 3) How many unsuccessful romantic relationships do you think your friend has had in his/her lifetime?

Instructions: For all of the following statements, indicate how well the statement describes your friend and their romantic relationships.

1 = Disagree strongly, 5 = Agree Strongly

- 1) My friend is successful in romantic relationships.
- 2) My friend has good romantic relationships.
- 3) My friend is competent at romantic relationships.
- 4) My friend is especially caring toward his/her romantic partner.
- 5) My friend is very supportive in romantic relationships.
- 6) My friend is loving toward his/her partner.
- 7) My friend argues a lot with his/her romantic partners.
- 8) My friend gets into fights with his/her romantic partners.
- 9) My friend has frequent conflicts with his/her romantic partners.

APPENDIX D. DAILY DIARY MEASURES

Generic

Motivation

Instructions. To what extent did you have each of the following goals or motivations?

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Agree
- 4 = Strongly Agree

- 1) I was motivated by POWER today.
- 2) I was motivated to gain AFFILIATION today.

Emotion

Instructions. To what extent did you do feel each of the following today?

- 1 = Not at all
- 2 = A little
- 3 = Moderately
- 4 = Quite a bit
- 5 = Extremely

- 1) Today, I felt excited.
- 2) Today, I felt enthusiastic.
- 3) Today, I felt distressed.
- 4) Today, I felt nervous.

Appraisal

Instructions. How much do you agree with each of the following statements about your day today?

- 1 = Strongly agree
- 2 = Somewhat agree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Somewhat disagree
- 5 = Strongly disagree

- 1) I viewed events as THREATENING today.
- 2) I viewed events as REWARDING today.

Coping

Instructions. How much do you agree with each of the following statements about your day today?

- 1 = Strongly agree
- 2 = Somewhat agree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Somewhat disagree
- 5 = Strongly disagree

- 1) When something stressful happened today, I concentrated my efforts into doing something about it.
- 2) When something stressful happened today, I refused to believe it happened.

Behaviors

Instructions. How many times did you do the following behaviors today?

- 1 = Not a single time
- 2 = 1-2 times
- 3 = 3-5 times
- 4 = More than 5 times

- 1) Today, I helped someone.
- 2) Today, I comforted someone.
- 3) Today, I argued with someone.
- 4) Today, I insulted someone.
- 5) Today, I was self-indulgent.
- 6) Today, I gave into an urge.

Events

Instructions. How many times did the following events occur to you today?

- 1 = Not a single time
- 2 = One time
- 3 = Two times
- 4 = More than two times

- 1) Someone criticized me today.
- 2) Someone treated me unfairly today.
- 3) Something good happened to me today.
- 4) I experienced a lot of pleasant events.
- 5) Today, I had a deadline to worry about.
- 6) Today, I had a lot of responsibilities.
- 7) Today, I did not have enough time to meet obligations.
- 8) Today, I had too many things to do.

Goal-Related

Instructions. Rate the extent to which each behavior occurred when you were trying to achieve your goals.

- 1) While working on my goals today, I...
 - 1 = Was definitely not committed
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 = Was fully committed
- 2) While working on my goals today, I...
 - 1 = Often quit after starting
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 = Finished what I started
- 3) While working on my goals today, I...
 - 1 = Was rather lazy
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5 = Worked very hard

Partner-Related

Feelings

Instructions: For the following, you will indicate your feelings for your partner today. Use the scale provided:

- 1 = Not at all
- 2 = A little
- 3 = Moderately
- 4 = Quite a bit
- 5 = Extremely

- 1) Irritated with my partner.
- 2) Angry at my partner.
- 3) Annoyed at my partner.
- 4) Caring towards my partner.
- 5) Friendly towards my partner.
- 6) Sympathetic towards my partner.

Instructions: How satisfied were you with each of the following today? Use the same scale.

- 7) Your partner.
- 8) Your relationship.
- 9) Your time with your partner.

Events

Instructions: How many times did the following events occur to you today? Use this scale:

- 0 = not a single time
- 1 = one time
- 2 = two times
- 3 = more than two times

- 1) My partner criticized me today.
- 2) My partner treated me unfairly today.
- 3) My partner argued with me today.
- 4) My partner supported me today.
- 5) My partner helped me with a problem today.
- 6) My partner listened to me today.

Behaviors

Instructions: How many times did you do the following behaviors today? Use the scale provided:

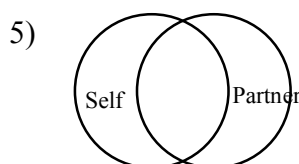
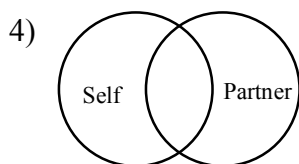
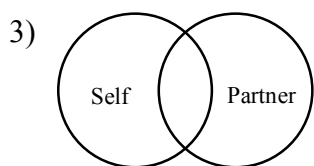
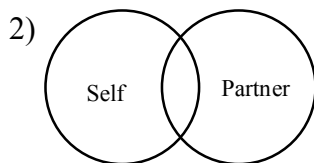
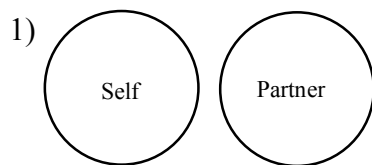
- 0 = not a single time
- 1 = 1-2 times
- 2 = 3-5 times

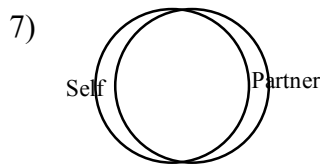
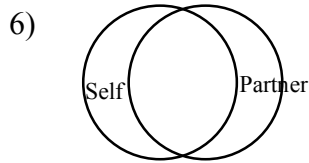
3 = more than 5 times (i.e. often)

- 1) I helped my partner.
- 2) I forgave my partner.
- 3) I comforted my partner.
- 4) I argued with my partner.
- 5) I insulted my partner.
- 6) I criticized my partner.
- 7) I was anxious about my relationship.
- 8) I was suspicious of my partner.
- 9) I sought reassurance from my partner.
- 10) I was intentionally distant from my partner.
- 11) I sought independence from my partner.
- 12) I concealed thoughts and feelings from my partner.

Closeness

Instructions: Please pick the pair of circles that best described your relationship TODAY.





Time Spent with Partner/Activities with Partner

Instructions: For each of the following activities, indicate whether you did it with your partner today.

- 1 = NO
- 2 = YES

- 1) I physically spent time with my partner.
- 2) I texted my partner.
- 3) I talked to my partner today.
- 4) I did an activity with my partner.
- 5) I went on a date with my partner.
- 6) I engaged in romantic physical activity with my partner.

Motivation

Instructions: Below are different goals/motivations that you may or may not have had in your relationship today. To what extent did you have each of the following goals or motivations?

1 = Not at all true today, 4 = Very much true today.

- 1) I was motivated to express my feelings towards my partner today.
- 2) I was motivated to act romantically towards my partner today.
- 3) I was motivated to listen to my partner today.
- 4) I was motivated to spend time with my partner today.
- 5) I was motivated to hurt my partner today.
- 6) I was motivated to be in control of my partner today.
- 7) I was motivated to question my partner today.
- 8) I was motivated to get away from my partner today.